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NOONTIDE LEISURE.

VOL. I.



LONDON :
Printed by A. & R. Spottiswoode,
New-Street-Square.

JUSTIN WINSOR,
CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

57

NOONTIDE LEISURE;

OR,

SKETCHES IN SUMMER,

OUTLINES FROM NATURE AND IMAGINATION,

AND INCLUDING

A Tale of the Days of Shakspeare.

BY

NATHAN DRAKE, M.D.

AUTHOR OF LITERARY HOURS,
OF ESSAYS ON PERIODICAL LITERATURE, OF SHAKSPEARE
AND HIS TIMES, OF WINTER NIGHTS, AND
EVENINGS IN AUTUMN.

Come, sweetest SUMMER!
And o'er old AVON's magic edge,
Whence SHAKSPEARE cull'd the spiky sedge,
All playful yet, in years unripe,
To frame a shrill and simple pipe,
O Goddess, guide my pilgrim feet!

WARTON.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

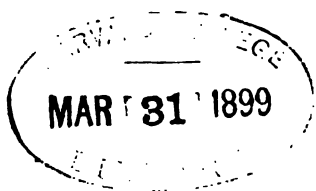
VOL. I.

LONDON:


PRINTED FOR T. CADELL, IN THE STRAND:
AND W. BLACKWOOD, EDINBURGH.

1824.

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Bequest of
Justin Winsor



TO
THE LOVERS OF SHAKSPEARE,
THESE VOLUMES,
INCLUDING A NARRATIVE WHOSE
PRIMARY OBJECT HAS BEEN
TO UNFOLD ITS AUTHOR'S CONCEPTION OF THE
MORAL AND DOMESTIC FEELINGS OF
THE BARD OF AVON,
ARE INSCRIBED,
BY ONE, WHOSE ADMIRATION OF
THE PRIVATE CHARACTER OF THE POET,
FAINTLY AS IT HAS BEEN SHADOWED OUT BY
TRADITION,
IS SCARCELY TO BE EXCEEDED
BY THAT WHICH HE ENTERTAINS FOR THE
DEPTH AND UNIVERSALITY OF HIS
GENIUS AND TALENTS.



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NOONTIDE LEISURE.

No. I.

Now, while the fervid ray shoots o'er the ~~ships~~,
How grateful feels the margin of the flood !
How grateful now to trace the devious course
Of some wild pastoral stream, that changes oft
Its varied lapse ; and ever as it winds,
Enchantment follows, and new beauties rise. —
O Nature ! lovely Nature ! thou canst give
Delight thyself a thousand ways, and lend
To every object charms ! With thee, even books
A higher relish gain. The poet's lay
Grows sweeter in the shade of wavy woods,
Or lulling lapse of crystal stream beside ;
Dim umbrage lends to philosophic lore
Severer thought ; and Meditation leads
Her pupil Wisdom to the green resort
Of solemn silence, her inspiring school.

BIDLAKE.

THERE is no part of a SUMMER'S DAY in the
country more delightful, perhaps, to the con-





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Compare our happy lot, not only with the situation of those who are necessitated to labour beneath the blaze of an European sun, but with those who are condemned to endure the tenfold horrors of a torrid clime. It is a comparison of this kind which has rendered the following lines so pre-eminently striking, especially towards the close, where the personification of thirst introduces a thought that speaks to us in the very voice of nature.

But ever against restless heat,
 Bear me to the rock-arch'd seat,
 O'er whose dim mouth an ivy'd oak
 Hangs nodding from the low-brow'd rock ;
 Haunted by that chaste nymph alone,
 Whose waters cleave the smoothed stone ;
 Which, as they gush upon the ground,
 Still scatter misty dew around :
 A rustic, wild, grotesque alcove,
 Its sides with mantling woodbines wove ;
 Cool as the cave where Clio dwells,
 Whence Helicon's fresh fountain wells ;
 Or noon-tide grot where Sylvan sleeps
 In hoar Lycæum's piny steeps.

Me, Goddess, in such cavern lay,
 While all without is scorch'd in day ;

NOÖNTIDE LEISURE.

7

Sore sighs the weary swain, beneath
His with'ring hawthorn on the heath ;
The drooping hedger wishes eve,
In vain, of labour short reprieve !
Meantime, on Afric's glowing sands,
Smote with keen heat the trav'ler stands :
Low sinks his heart, while round his eye
Measures the scenes that boundless lie,
Ne'er yet by foot of mortal worn,
Where Thirst, wan pilgrim, walks forlorn.
How does he wish some cooling wave
To slake his lips, or limbs to lave !
*And thinks, in every whisper low,
He hears a bursting fountain flow.*

WARTON.*

But not only does a retreat of this kind afford the most delicious refreshment to the languid and over-heated functions of the body, it communicates also to the intellectual powers a luxury of a still higher description, leading to those gentle thoughts and beautiful imaginings which dissipate for a time the cares and turmoils of a restless world, and woo the breast to peace and

* Ode on the Approach of Summer.

harmony. Who that has once enjoyed the tranquil blessings of an hour like this, is not ready to exclaim with the philosophic enthusiasm of Lucretius,

Si non aurea sunt juvenum simulacra per ædeis
 Lampadas igniferas manibus retinentia dextris,
 Lumina nocturnis epulis ut suppeditentur ;
 Nec domus argento fulget, auroque renidet,
 Nec citharis reboant laqueata aurataque templa ;
Attamen inter se, prostrati in gramine molli,
Propter aquæ rivum, sub ramis arboris altæ,
Non magnis opibus jucundè corpora curant.

Lib. ii. l. 24 ad 31.

What, though the dome be wanting, whose proud
 walls

A thousand lamps irradiate, propt sublime
 By frolic forms of youths in wassy gold,
 Flinging their splendours o'er the midnight feast ;
 Though gold and silver blaze not o'er the board,
 Nor music echo round the gaudy roof?
Yet listless laid the velvet grass along
Near gliding streams, by shadowy trees o'er-arch'd,
Such pomps we need not.

GOOD.

or to pause with delight over the picture which Gray, in the very spirit of the Roman bard, has given us of his minstrel-youth "to fortune and to fame unknown."

"There at the foot of yonder nodding beech
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by."

It is the pre-disposition which scenery of this kind, and at such an hour, gives to the empire of fancy and reverie, which has rendered it so great a favourite with the lovers of poetry and romantic fiction. Relieved not only from the oppression of intolerable heat, but surrounded by the soft shadowings of a dreamy twilight, the ear, at the same time, lulled by the lapse of murmuring water, and the breezy stirrings of over-hanging foliage, imagination fleets as it were into a world of its own creation, peopling its fairy realms with all that can soothe the senses, and delight the gifted spirit, with all that legendary lore, or bardic harplings have declared in knightly hall, or ladies' bower. And such

was the enthusiasm which Milton owned, when he addressed the pensive inspirer of his earliest strains :

When the sun begins to fling
His flaring beams, me, Goddess, bring
To arched walks of twilight groves,
And shadows brown, that Sylvan loves,
Of pine, or monumental oak,
Where the rude axe, with heaved stroke,
Was never heard the Nymphs to daunt,
Or fright them from their hallow'd haunt ;
There in close covert by some brook,
Where no profaner eye may look,
Hide me from day's garish eye,
While the bee with honied thigh,
That at her flowery work doth sing,
And the water's murmuring,
With such consort as they keep,
Entice the dewy-feather'd sleep ;
And let some strange mysterious Dream
Wave at his wings in aery stream
Of lively portraiture display'd,
Softly on my eye-lids laid ;
And, as I wake, sweet musick breathe
Above, about, or underneath.

Il Penseroso.

And such too was the inspiration which Warton, one of the most eminent disciples of the school of Milton, felt, when "the sultry noon to appease," he calls for

The fairy bank, or magic lawn,
By Spenser's lavish pencil drawn;
Or bow'r in Vallombrosa's shade,
By legendary pens portray'd,

and then adds, with all the sombre and picturesque wildness of the great poet of *Il Penseroso*,

Haste, let me shroud from painful light,
On that hoar hill's aerial height,
In solemn state, where waving wide,
Thick pines with darkening umbrage hide
The rugged vaults, and riven tow'rs
Of that proud castle's painted bow'rs,
Whence *HARDYKNUTE*, a baron bold,
In Scotland's martial days of old,
Descended from the stately feast,
Begirt with many a warrior guest,
To quell the pride of Norway's king,
With quiv'ring lance and twanging string.
As thro' the caverns dim I wind,
Might I that holy legend find,

By fairies spelt in mystic rhymes,
To teach enquiring later times
What open force, or secret guile,
Dash'd into dust the solemn pile.

Ode on Summer.

Fascinating, however, and powerful as is the influence which a perfect seclusion of this kind, and at such an hour, sometimes exerts over the mind, in disposing it to indulge in the day-dreams of a poetic imagination, and the fairy shadowings of reverie, it has been found not less friendly to the abstractions of the philosopher, and the meditations of the moralist. It is in solitude and noontide silence like this, amid the awful yet soothing impressions of magnificent Nature, amid solemn groves, and age-struck woods, and falling waters, that we feel the nothingness, the utter vanity of the greater part of all human pursuits. Aloof, in short, from the contagion of a feverish world, and the reach of vulgar strife, every jarring passion sinks to rest, and life, with all its sad realities, its bearings, tendencies, and issues, is, or may be, viewed through a correct and unperturbed medium. We may, and do often, rise, in fact, from the contemplation with feelings better prepared to

encounter the necessary evils, and privations of our pilgrimage, and with a judgment which has learnt to estimate, at their just value, not only the glittering objects which attract but to delude the giddy and the thoughtless multitude, but those which, with a more imposing aspect, absorb and lead astray, the grave, the busy, and ambitious. It was thus that Gray, the most moral as well as the most pathetic and sublime of lyric poets, imbibed instruction from the noontide stillness of majestic scenery; and who that has mingled much with human society, and has a heart to be touched by the promptings of solitude, and the voiceless eloquence of nature, may not adopt his beautiful language, and say,

Where'er the oak's thick branches stretch
A broader, browner shade,
Where'er the rude and moss-grown beech
O'er-canopies the glade,
Beside some water's rushy brink
With me the Muse shall sit, and think
(At ease reclin'd in rustic state)
How vain the ardour of the crowd!
How low, how little are the proud!
How indigent the great!

Ode on Spring.

Nor, advancing a step still higher in the dignity and importance of the suggestions which the almost unbroken silence of the summer's noon-tide hour is calculated to convey to the mind, can we forbear remarking, that even piety and devotion may receive fresh accessions of strength and ardour from the scenes of deep and awful seclusion to which we are wont to fly, at such a season, for shelter and repose.

It is then, amidst the depths of glens and forests, at the foot of some o'erhanging rock, or within the caverned side of some stupendous mountain, where all is vast and lone, and hushed as midnight, that we seem to rise above the confines of mortality, and to commune with another world. Here, indeed, if ever, might we dare to hope for that intercourse which, in days long past, patriarchal record has ascribed to a chosen few among the sons of men pre-eminently good and wise, and who are said to have

Convers'd with angels, and immortal forms
On gracious errands bent,

a tradition which has furnished our amiable

Thomson with one of the most sublimely awful passages in his Seasons, where describing the noontide retreat of Summer as a favoured haunt of Meditation, and as best found beneath the canopy of embowering woods, he adds, in a strain of hallowed enthusiasm, unequalled, save by the muse of Milton,

Shook sudden from the bosom of the sky,
A thousand shapes or glide athwart the dusk,
Or stalk majestic on. Deep-rous'd, I feel
A sacred terror, a severe delight,
Creep through my mortal frame; and thus, methinks,
A voice, than human more, th' abstracted ear
Of fancy strikes : — “ Be not of us afraid,
Poor kindred man! thy fellow creatures, we
From the same Parent-Power our beings drew,
The same our Lord, and laws, and great pursuit.
Once, some of us, like thee, through stormy life
Toil'd, tempest-beaten, ere we could attain
This holy calm, this harmony of mind,
Where purity and peace immingle charms.
Then fear not us ; but with responsive song,
Amid these dim recesses, undisturb'd
By noisy folly, and discordant vice,
Of Nature sing with us, and Nature's God.
Here frequent, at the visionary hour,

When musing midnight reigns, or silent noon,
Angelic harps are in full concert heard,
And voices chaunting from the wood-crown'd hill,
The deepening dale, or inmost sylvan glade.
A privilege bestow'd by us, alone,
On Contemplation, or the hallow'd ear
Of poet, swelling to seraphic strain." *Summer.*

Of hours thus dear to the good and wise, to the admirers of nature, the favourites of fancy, and the lovers of contemplation, we have now only to confess, that it has been our wish to avail ourselves, so far at least as may prove, that whilst enjoying the delicious coolness of retreat by fountain, wood, or stream, we have been not altogether uninfluenced by the local spirit of the scene, nor totally unbenefited by what to the shade and silence of a noonday solitude we owe, in prompting through every age and clime, some of the most beautiful and ennobling speculations of human thought and genius.

It is our hope, therefore, and has been, indeed, our aim, that the following pages, whilst they furnish some amusement for the lovers of nature, of poetry, of biography, and of romance,

should, at the same time, include what may, indirectly at least, tend to improve the morals and amend the heart; what may, in short, for those who at the noontide hour of summer

“ Are listless laid the velvet grass along.”

afford that species of mental food which shall best harmonise with the season and its scenery, and with the feelings and associations which they are calculated to suggest.

No. II.*

Shakspeare unites in his existence the utmost elevation and the utmost depth ; and the most foreign, and even apparently irreconcilable properties subsist in him peaceably together. The world of spirits and nature have laid all their treasures at his feet : in strength, a demi-god ; in profundity of view, a prophet ; in all-seeing wisdom, a protecting spirit of a higher order ; he lowers himself to mortals as if unconscious of his superiority, and is as open and unassuming as a child.

SCHLÉGEL, *apud Black.*

* The principal object of this narrative has been to bring forward a picture of the moral, social, and domestic life of Shakspeare in accordance with the few traits which tradition has preserved of his personal history. No one can be more aware than myself of the danger which must be incurred in venturing to introduce our immortal countryman on the living scene ; yet such has ever appeared to me, as well from the study of his writings, as from the features of his scanty biography, to be the extraordinary beauty, and almost sublime simplicity of his *private* character, that, notwithstanding the manifold risk attending the experiment, I have been induced to make the attempt, with the view of more fully and completely expressing my own conception of his peculiar worth in all the relations of humanity. In doing this, a portion of his literary character will, of necessity, appear, but it is sketched in subserviency to the main design.

JULIUS SHAW*, the master of the Falcon Inn, at Stratford-upon-Avon, had just been called away from a party of friends who were recreating

* Julius Shaw was a personage of considerable respectability in Stratford. He was born Sept. 1571; he married Anne Boyes, May 5th, 1594; he was chosen Bailiff of Stratford in 1615; he was a witness to Shakspeare's will in 1616, and died at Stratford, where he was buried, June 24th, 1629. He was consequently, at the period when this narrative commences, about the age of forty-four, and seven years younger than his friend Shakspeare.

"Julius Shaw," says Mr. Ireland, speaking of the Falcon Inn, as it existed in Shakspeare's time, "was the name of the person who then kept the house, and who was a subscribing witness to our poet's Will. Shaw was by trade a carpenter and undertaker, and is supposed, with some degree of probability, the person who buried him. Shakspeare is said to have passed much time in this house, and to have had a strong partiality for the landlord, as well as for his liquor."—*Picturesque Views on the Avon*, p. 203, 204.

Whether this account can be depended upon I know not, but the tradition is sufficient for the purposes to which it is applied; for I wish it to be understood that the chief object of this narrative is to unfold my own idea of the private character of Shakspeare, to which every incident, whether originating from pure fiction or supposed fact, is held in subordination.

There were *three* Shaws existing at one time in Stratford; RALPH SHAW, a wool-driver, the father of *William* and *Julius*, and the friend of Mr. John Shakspeare; WILLIAM, the eldest son, a glover, and JULIUS, the youngest, the personage whose agency I have introduced at the commencement of this tale.—Vide MALONE's *Shakspeare*, apud Boswell, vol. ii. p. 79. 547. 554. and 609.

themselves in his orchard bower, on the evening of the 9th of June, 1615, when his attention was diverted from the business on which he had been summoned, by a crowd assembling at his door. On stepping forward to enquire into what had brought them together, he perceived at a little distance, some peasantry approaching, and carrying a kind of frame or bier, on which lay extended the body of a man. This was preceded by an aged servant, well mounted, and leading a blood mare; whilst followed close behind, on a grey palfrey, and evidently in great distress of mind, a young lady of the most interesting features and person.

An accident, he was told, had happened to a gentleman on the road. He had been thrown from his horse, within a few miles of Stratford, and, having been seriously injured, they were bringing him to the Falcon, as the nearest place of public accommodation. Scarcely had he received this account, when the sufferer reached his gates; and Shaw, who possessed a large share of humanity, together with an active and intelligent mind, instantly issued his orders, in the execution of which, he himself took a pro-

minent part for whatever could tend to the comfort and welfare of his unfortunate guest.

The bustle and concourse to which this occurrence had given rise, soon attracted the attention of one who has since deservedly been placed foremost in the ranks of human genius; for immediately opposite the hostelry of Julius Shaw was New Place, the then residence of our immortal Shakspeare!

The bard, who was amusing himself in his garden with his little grand-daughter, Elizabeth Hall, a beautiful girl about seven years of age, surprised by the unusual noise and number of voices which seemed to issue from the immediate neighbourhood, hastened into the house, but not meeting with any satisfactory explanation of the cause, either there, or from those who stood thickly congregated near his door, he sent over to the Falcon, requesting that Shaw, with whom, as a man of great good humour and more than common talent, he was on terms of intimacy, would let him know what had happened to occasion such a crowd in the street.

The servant, however, had scarcely left the door, when the message was superseded by the

arrival of Shaw himself, who, as soon as he had seen the unfortunate gentleman placed upon a bed, and had made some enquiries into the origin and nature of the accident, and into the quality of his guests, had hurried over to New Place to consult with Shakspeare, his adviser and oracle on every momentous occasion, as to what steps he should next pursue.

“ Well, mine host,” exclaimed the bard as the anxious Innkeeper entered the room, “ whence comes this hubbub at your gates? I am afraid, from your countenance, that something unpleasant has happened at the Falcon.”

“ I cannot say that it has happened there, Master Shakspeare, but a marvellous bad accident has befallen a very worthy-looking gentleman, and he now lies in extremity at my house. He has been thrown from his horse, and so much bruised, and otherwise hurt, that I am in doubt if it will go well with him; and his daughter, as beautiful a young creature as even your fancy, I will venture to say, Master Shakspeare, ever formed, takes on at such a rate, that it grieves my heart to see her; and there is the

old grey-headed servant, too, wringing his hands, and lamenting so bitterly."

"Run, my good Shaw," interrupted the humane bard, "run and tell my son-in-law to hasten to your house immediately; and in the interim, I will step over, and see what can be done on my part."

It need scarcely be mentioned to my readers that the person thus sent for was Dr. Hall, who had married in 1607, Shakspeare's eldest daughter, Susanna, and who was held in considerable estimation as a physician of celebrity and skill.

His destined patient, however, was fast recovering from the death-like stupor into which he had been thrown by the violence of the fall. He had recognised his daughter, who was hanging over him in an agony of grief and apprehension, and the words "My dearest Helen," had just escaped his lips, when the name of Shakspeare was announced; a name which even under the conflicting struggles of returning life, seemed not to have lost its powers of excitement; for the languid eyes of the sufferer were instantly directed towards the door of the apartment, and whilst one hand grasped that of his beloved

daughter, with the energy of parental love, the other was tremulously extended towards the approaching figure of the bard.

Shakspeare on the stage, and, as far as his works had hitherto issued from the press, in the closet also, had long been an object of the warmest admiration to Eustace Montchensey, for such was the name of the individual who now lay stretched upon the bed of pain, and whose intention it had been, if the accident which we have recorded as occurring a few miles short of Stratford had not intervened, to have called upon the poet; for he was on his way from London to his seat in Derbyshire, and had lately learnt that our bard, having finally quitted the metropolis, had sought retirement in his native town.

There wanted but the opportunity of a personal interview with Shakspeare, to love the man as much as his works; for Nature had impressed upon his countenance not only what was great and intellectual, but what was in the highest degree lovely and engaging; and more especially on this occasion were his features and manner so entirely the index of his heart, that

as he drew near to take the hand of Montchensey, and before a word had escaped his lips, misery had lost half its load from the conscious presence of kindness and compassion.

“ I am come, Sir,” uttered the benevolent bard, in a tone tremulous through emotion, for the distress of the young and innocent Helen had awakened his most painful sympathy, “ I am come to offer you the accommodation of my house ; it is but a step hence ; for though I entertain a high opinion of the care and attention of mine host here, yet a place like this is ill calculated for the quiet which your situation demands. . My wife will assist this young lady in nursing you ; we will have a physician immediately ; indeed, I have sent for one already, and if he sees no objection, we will have you removed instantly.”

All this was said with such unaffected tenderness, so evidently did it flow from the noblest simplicity, and benevolent greatness of character, that Helen Montchensey, unable to repress the mingled emotions of gratitude and admiration which were swelling at her bosom, almost

unconsciously threw herself at the feet of her visitor, and bathed them with her tears.

“ My dear young lady,” cried the astonished Shakspeare, “ kneel not to me, I am doing but what the common offices of humanity require ; and happy, I do assure you, if I may, perchance, be instrumental towards the preservation of your father’s life.”

It was at this moment that the door opening, presented Dr. Hall to their view, a man of strong talent and much philanthropy ; and who, from the scene thus unexpectedly brought before him, soon felt deeply interested in the welfare of Montchensey and his daughter. He had, fortunately, from the detail which Shaw had given him, taken care to come accompanied by a surgeon of the name of Court *, and whom he now directed to bleed his patient copiously, at the same time assuring the agitated and almost sinking Helen, that as far as he could at present judge, her father was likely to do well ; adding, however, that rest and quietude were essential

* A gentleman of this name was at that time practising as a surgeon at Stratford.

to his recovery. "It was on this very account Doctor," observed Shakspeare, "that I have been recommending my house to Mr. Montchensey, and I trust, that the injunction you have now given, will induce him to accept the offer."

"How can I sufficiently thank you, my noble friend," faintly articulated Montchensey, as the abstraction of blood was rapidly relieving his pain and difficulty of breathing, "how can I sufficiently thank you for this unlooked-for kindness!" Here, however, the tide of acknowledgment, which was about to flow with more energy than was consistent with the safety of his patient, was interrupted by Dr. Hall; when Helen, turning upon our gentle bard one of those ardent looks of gratitude and intense feeling, to which no language can do justice, tremulously, though somewhat rapturously, exclaimed, "Let me then supply the place of my dear father, Sir, and say, that to be thus indebted will, I am certain, prove the most heart-soothing recollection of our lives."

"You are a skilful flatterer, my lovely lady," returned the poet smiling, "and I almost begin

to fear that, old as I am, I am incautiously placing myself within the reach of danger; but I am willing, nevertheless, to endure the hazard, and therefore hope that Dr. Hall will not object to the immediate removal of his patient."

"I must say," replied the Doctor, "that I think such a step would not be advisable to-night; but if Mr. Montchensey, from the operation he has now undergone, and from what I shall order for him, should prove, as I have little doubt will be the case, much better in the morning, I shall then, certainly, as the distance is so trifling, not venture to oppose your arrangement."

"Be it so," rejoined the bard "and now, my worthy friends," he added, "leaving you under the further direction of your kind physician, I heartily wish you a good night, trusting that nothing will occur to prevent your safe lodgment under my roof in the morning."

Mine host, and the old grey-headed groom, were at the foot of the stairs as Shakspeare descended from the chamber of Montchensey. "Here is Peter, Sir," cried Shaw, "so sorely distressed about his master and young mistress,

that I promised to see you about them; we have been waiting on this spot for some time, to catch a sight of you, and I shall be mainly glad, for his sake, if you can give us any comfortable tidings of the poor gentleman."

There was that, indeed, in the time-worn but speaking countenance of the aged domestic, which was well fitted to attract attention; for it was, on this occasion, in a very high degree indicative of fidelity and attachment: "If I lose my master, Sir, he exclaimed, my next sad duty will be to follow my dear young lady to her grave, and then, the sooner I am laid in the kirk-yard myself the better."

"Be of good cheer, my friend," replied his kind auditor, "for your master is, I trust, recovering fast. To-morrow he will be under my roof, and you and I, Peter, and your young mistress will nurse him and take care of him until he gets well." Tears of gratitude gushed from the brightening eyes of the old man; whilst Shakspeare, turning to the honest landlord of the Falcon, added, "As for you, mine host, I think I know you sufficiently to believe that you will not murmur at the motives which induce

me to rob you for a season of your guest; and I request you, therefore, to tell Dr. Hall, when he leaves his patient, that I will thank him to step over to New-Place for a few minutes before he returns home."

With a heart satisfied as to the part he had performed, Shakspeare re-entered his dwelling, and hastened to acquaint his wife with the company he had reason to expect on the following day. With her and his daughter Judith, and the little Elizabeth, he now found Mrs. Hall, who, having heard from Shaw an account of the accident, and likewise understood that her father had interested himself in behalf of the strangers, was anxious, more especially as her husband was detained longer than she expected, to learn further particulars.

"And who, my dear Sir," said Mrs. Hall, as her father entered the room, "is this unfortunate gentleman? for, from the description, imperfect as it was, which I received from Shaw, I cannot help feeling much both for him and his daughter." "His name," replied the bard, "is Montchensey, and it is one of which I have a faint recollection as somehow or other con-

nected, though many years ago, with the concerns of my unhappy friend, Raymond Neville; but we shall soon be in a way to obtain further information, for I have been so greatly struck with the appearance and manner both of him and his child, that I have asked them to make New-Place their home, until the former shall have sufficiently recovered to be able to pursue his journey. They will be here," he continued, turning to Mrs. Shakspeare, "to-morrow morning; and I am pretty certain, from the little I have already seen of Helen Montchensey, that you, Susanna," addressing Mrs. Hall, "will be delighted with her, so much is there of filial tenderness and guileless simplicity in all she says and does. Indeed I may venture to say, from the strong and heart-felt interest which their aged servant seems to take in their behalf, that our promised guests will, in all likelihood, prove characters of no common value; for I have ever found the attachment of a long-tried domestic an almost unerring index of the moral worth of the master. But I perceive," he added, "that your husband is crossing over the way, and it is probable, from the extensive knowledge which

his profession gives him of the families in this and the neighbouring counties, that he may throw some light on the subject of our enquiry."

"I can only say," replied the Doctor, taking his chair, "that our newly-acquired friend, Eustace Montchensey is, I understand, a man of considerable property in Derbyshire; that he lives in a very ancient manor-house on the banks of the Wye, and that, notwithstanding some peculiar traits in his character, and some singular occurrences in his family history, the particulars of which are said to be mixed up with no little mystery and contrariety of report, he is held by his neighbours in high respect and esteem. Beyond this I cannot go, but the accident which has now occurred, and which I am happy to say is not likely to be attended with any serious consequences, will, doubtless, in a short time render us familiar, not only with the characters of him and his daughter, who, by the by, is one of the most pleasing young women I have lately seen, but, in all probability, with some portion too of their domestic history."

With this communication, scanty as it was, though at the same time calculated to excite

considerable curiosity, were the ladies of the party, for the present, compelled to be satisfied; consoling themselves with the reflection just suggested, that in a little time they should have ample opportunities of observing and judging for themselves. Soon after this, Dr. Hall and his lady took their leave, after promising to be at New-Place early on the next day.

The morning rose bright and lovely, and immediately after breakfast Shakspeare, accompanied by his son-in-law, stepped over to the Falcon. They were received by Helen Montchensey with a smile, which told them, more emphatically than words could have done, that all was well; and, accordingly, Dr. Hall, on returning from the chamber of his patient, declared, that he thought him sufficiently recovered to venture on a removal.

With the assistance, therefore, of Peter, and the worthy landlord of the Falcon, Montchensey soon found himself securely lodged beneath a roof which he had often wished, and as often purposed to visit, though he had little calculated on an introduction to it in any manner approaching that to which he was now under the neces-

sity of submitting. It was precisely the one, however, best adapted as it proved, to furnish him with the opportunity he had so long coveted, that of being placed in a situation to study the heart and habitudes of the man who more than any other individual, had stamped on his mind the conception of great and universal genius.*

It may readily be conceived that he who could thus estimate the talents of our poet, was him-

* It may, perhaps, be thought, that for the early period in which my story is laid, I have attributed to Montchensey, throughout this narrative, too critical and discriminative an admiration for the dramatic talents of Shakspeare. But, I am persuaded, the picture is not overcharged; for though a *just* appreciation of the genius of Shakspeare was by no means so general and extended in the reign of James as in these our own days, yet were there several exalted spirits among the contemporaries of the poet, who fully and critically knew the incomparable value of their countryman, and expressed their estimate too of his poetical character in terms which have not since been surpassed, if equalled; and I would particularly mention as instances of this, the poem of Ben Jonson, and the verses to which the initials J. M. S. are annexed, commencing "A mind reflecting ages past." This latter production, which was first prefixed to the folio of 1632, I have already noticed with high commendation in my "Shakspeare and his Times," vol. ii. p. 545. et seq: and I must say, that I think it beyond all competition, the most powerful, comprehensive, and splendid poetical encomium on our immortal bard which has yet been produced.

self no ordinary character; and, indeed, there were few men who, either as to person, feature, or manner, more decidedly possessed the power of seizing and fixing attention.

Eustace Montchensey, the descendant of an ancient family in Derbyshire, was now in his forty-first year; but misfortune, and the current of acute feeling, had given to his features the appearance of more advanced life. In his form he was graceful and commanding, though thin and tall, while the lustre of a dark and penetrating eye was tempered by the pallor of his cheek, and by the expression on his countenance of a deep and rooted sorrow. At times, indeed, and when only in the presence of his daughter, the anxiety which had so long preyed upon his spirits, assumed the darker tone of anguish, and, apparently, of remorse; but a strong and highly cultivated intellect, an enthusiastic love for literature and the fine arts, and, above all, an ardent affection for his daughter, the lovely and amiable Helen, had hitherto contributed to mitigate and repress what might otherwise have proved too powerful for the integrity of his mind, or the vigour of his constitution.

In Helen Montchensey, indeed, he possessed all that parental fondness could have wished for. She was now of that age when female loveliness is most attractive, having just completed her eighteenth year, and an object, in fact, more interesting to the eye or to the heart, could seldom be contemplated. It was not, however, to mere beauty of form and symmetry of feature, though she possessed these in a remarkable degree, that she was indebted for that influence over the feelings which even the casual observer felt and acknowledged as a species of fascination. There was in the dewy light of her soft blue eyes, shaded as they were by long and pensile lashes; in the smile just breaking from her opening lips, in the delicate and ever-varying bloom that seemed to live and die upon her cheek; in the oval contour and entire cast of her countenance, partially, and ever gracefully veiled by falling ringlets of light brown hair, an expression of sweetness and simplicity, which, mingled, as it seemed to be, with the tenderest touches of melancholy and resignation, not even the most callous mind could long resist.

If such, from outward appearance and cursory

observation, was the interest excited by Montchensey and his daughter, greatly was it augmented by a more intimate knowledge of their dispositions and modes of thinking; nor could Shakspeare, who possessed what might be termed an almost intuitive perception of character, be many days in the society of his guests without forming a pretty accurate judgment of their merits and defects, both in a mental and a moral light.

The temporary indisposition, indeed, of Montchensey, which confined him to his chamber for the first few days of his residence at New-Place, not only contributed to unveil some features of his character which had otherwise lain long concealed from every eye save that of his daughter, but placed also the filial love and affectionate temper of Helen in the most prominent point of view. Pain and languor, and the intimation which they so forcibly press on the mind of the perishable tenure of our being here, will frequently relax the most guarded caution; and to Shakspeare, who was daily admitted to the bed-side of his newly-acquired friend, it soon became evident, that, notwithstanding every

effort to subdue what was passing within, there was something at the heart of Montchensey which marred its peace, and which would every now and then suddenly and unexpectedly reveal itself by transient starts of horror. It was at these moments, too, that the interest of the scene became doubled, by the expression of love and pity, and apprehension, which agitated the features of the shuddering Helen.

As the health and strength, however, of Montchensey improved, these aberrations became less perceptible; and the whole interest of the situation in which he had been so singularly placed, began to kindle up an enthusiasm, before which the customary depression of his spirits seemed gradually to fade away. Shakspeare, indeed, with a kindness and attention that even in an ordinary character would have availed much, but which, as coming from him, and operating on such a mind as Montchensey's, was fitted to achieve wonders, used every endeavour to lighten the gloom which appeared, at intervals, so darkly to overshadow the prospects of his guest.

It was on the eighth morning of his residence at New-Place, that Montchensey, though still

somewhat lame, and occasionally suffering much pain, ventured, with the permission of his friendly physician, Dr. Hall, to leave his chamber. On reaching the vestibule, he was shown by a servant into the library, with information that his master, who was at present engaged, would be with him in a short time.

This room, which Shakspeare called his own, had, together with an eastern aspect, a pleasant look out into the garden, and was very neatly fitted up in the Gothic style, with carved oaken presses well stored with books, of which the leaves *, and not the backs, being placed in front, and these decorated with silken strings, and occasionally with gold and silver clasps, in order to confine the sides of the covers, not only contrasted well with the dark hue of the oak, but gave a light and cheerful appearance to the apartment. Over the mantle-piece, which was of the same material as the presses, massy, and richly sculptured into flowers, hung a portrait, in oil colours, of Lord Southampton, by

* For a more minute account of the mode of arranging and decorating books in a library, at this period, see "Shakspeare and his Times," vol. i. p. 436.

Cornelius Jansen; and on the side opposite the fire-place, and immediately over a very old and curious cabinet of walnut-tree wood, were two pictures of Chaucer and Spenser. A beautiful though somewhat ponderous desk, inlaid with ebony and silver, and which had been a present to the poet from his noble and munificent patron, together with a high-backed arm-chair of rather cumbrous workmanship, with a triangular seat and cushion, and a few other chairs of similar form, but smaller dimensions, completed the furniture of the room, the floor of which was strewed with rushes, whilst in the hearth of the ample chimney stood an antique vase of sweet-scented shrubs.

Montchensey, with an eagerness and curiosity proportioned to the admiration which he felt for the owner of this apartment, almost immediately commenced a survey of its literary contents, and was astonished to perceive how rich and ample were its stores, not only in the departments of Poetry and Romance, where he had expected to find a large and curious fund, but in those of History, Biography, and Criticism; and such were the intimations in nearly every

volume which he examined, of its having been placed there not for ostentation, but for use, that the variety and extent of Shakspeare's reading appeared to him, taking into consideration how busy had been the tenor of his past life, almost as extraordinary as the depth and originality of his genius.

Whilst thus engaged, and at the moment occupied in turning over a copy of the English *Gesta Romanorum* of Richard Robinson, the bard of Avon entered; and here we may be allowed to introduce the sketch which Montchensey, in writing shortly afterwards to a friend in town, gave of the personal appearance of the poet on this occasion. "Pain and sickness," he observes, "had hitherto disinclined me, notwithstanding all my enthusiasm on the subject, for any very critical consideration of the features and person of the bard; but on this auspicious morning, comparatively free from suffering, and animated by the scene around me, I felt an eager and anticipated delight in the opportunity I was about to enjoy, not only of contemplating, under more favourable circumstances as to myself, the manners and person of

my generous host, but of unburthening my heart of the deep and almost overwhelming sense which it entertained of his kindness and benevolence. Conceive then, my dear Charles, for I know thou art an admirer, almost as ardent as myself, of the author of *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*, conceive the door of this interesting little study opening, and Shakspeare coming forward with a smile of the most fascinating good humour, to congratulate your friend on his recovery. There was, indeed, an expression of so much sweetness and benignity in his features, that I thought I had never beheld a more interesting countenance. You will tell me this was partly owing to irresistible prepossession in his favour; it may have been so; but I will endeavour to be more particular. He appeared to me in height about the middle size, not corpulent, but rather full in his person, which, notwithstanding he is in his fifty-second year, may be still justly termed handsome, as well as correctly and finely formed. His forehead, high and unusually ample in its dimensions, is nobly expanded, and his hair, which is thinly scattered on the top of his head, clusters thickly about his temples and neck, and

is of a beautiful auburn colour. His eyes, in a most remarkable degree pleasing in their expression, yet, at the same time, profoundly indicative of the mighty mind within, are of a light and lively hazel, with brows that form nearly a complete arch. To this description, if I add the undulating outline of the nose, the dimpled expression of the cheeks, the perfect symmetry of the mouth, and the open sweetness of the lips, you may form to yourself a pretty accurate picture of the bard, more especially when I further remark, that the contour of his face is oval, the upper lip surmounted by a mustachio with the extremities slightly elevated, and the chin covered by a pointed beard. It may be necessary, also, in order to render my portrait more striking, to say something of his dress, which, at this morning's interview, consisted of a loose black gown, or tabard, without sleeves, a rich doublet of scarlet cloth, hose of dark grey, and boots or buskins of russet-coloured leather." *

* I have endeavoured, both in this instance, and in every other, during the course of the narrative, which admits of any appeal to record or tradition, to adhere with scrupulous accu-

Such was the minute representation which Montchensy, who fixed the highest value on every thing connected with the name of Shakspeare, transmitted to his friend of the features and person of the bard, as he appeared to him on entering his library at New-Place on this memorable morning.

There was something, indeed, so frank, and disengaged, and, at the same time, so perfectly cordial and unaffected, both in the looks and language of Shakspeare, not only on this occasion, but in all his intercourse with those for whom he felt any regard, that it was scarcely possible for any individual so circumstanced, not to feel easy and assured in his society. As soon, therefore, as Montchensy had expressed in a more full and energetic manner than he had hitherto been able to do, his deep sense of

racy to what has been left us with regard to costume, dress, or personal features. Thus, the tabard and doublet which I have given to Shakspeare, are exactly those in which he appeared on his monument at Stratford, previous to its being washed with a stone colour. It should also be recollected, that male attire in the reign of James the First, was, in order to please the taste of that monarch, singularly showy.

the kindness which he had experienced beneath his roof, in doing which, however, he had to encounter several good humoured attempts at interruption from his friendly host, then pointing to the well-laden shelves which surrounded him, "I have been amusing myself during your absence," he said, "in turning over a few of the many very curious and valuable volumes which, in history, poetry, and romantic fiction, you have been so fortunate as to get together; and astonished I am, I must confess, when I recollect how entirely your time has been occupied, and from a very early period, too, by the stage, both as an actor, manager, and poet, to find you have been not only a copious collector, but likewise a very diligent reader."

"Your surprise will be diminished," returned the poet with a smile, "when you shall perceive, that, with the exception of a very few books in French and Italian, the whole of this collection travels not beyond our native tongue. Time has not been spared me to cultivate what little knowledge I obtained at school of the learned languages; and, thanks to the crowd of translators who honoured the reign of our great and glori-

ous Elizabeth, the wealth of Greece and Rome, as far, at least, as fact and incident are concerned, has been laid at my feet. Rich I am, indeed, in poetry and fiction; the drama, as far as it has been open to my researches here and elsewhere, you would, of course, expect to meet, and I must acknowledge a warm partiality, not only for the long-spun details of our honest chroniclers, of which I can boast an abundant store, but for the wonders of Romance, and the legends of our popular minstrelsy; the latter more especially, under all its forms of song and ballad, I have been anxious to collect, as affording, together with the Italian tale, now so familiar to our ears, some of the best materials for dramatic fable, and possessing, at the same time, in a degree nearly peculiar to itself, a simplicity the most lovely and engaging."

"There is one deficiency, however, in your library," remarked Montchensey, "which you must allow me to point out, as it is one which I cannot reflect upon without singular regret. Here and there, scattered, and almost hidden as it were, with peculiar negligence, among materials of far inferior value, I have been able to

detect a few of your own admirable productions; but why do you not, my friend, retired as you now are from the bustle and competition of a London life, give us a collected, and what I will not hesitate to say is much wanted, a corrected edition of your dramas? Not only are the quarto copies we possess, printed in such a manner as to convince me they have had not a particle of your superintendence; but a number of plays, of which, I am persuaded, you have scarcely written a line, have been brought on the stage as yours, and even published with your name!"

"It is very true," replied the bard with a somewhat jocular air, "and I must be content, I am afraid, like many a greater man, to father what does not strictly belong to me. But, indeed, my good friend, whilst I heartily thank you for your kind anxiety about the fate of my productions, I must at the same time confess, that I have never yet dreamt of doing what you have suggested. The fact is, the pieces you allude to have more than answered my expectations; for they have not only procured me a bare subsistence, one of the chief objects for

which they were *at first* written, but they have likewise obtained me the applause and good-will of my contemporaries, the patronage and friendship of several great and good men, and a competency for life. What may be their lot when I am dead and gone, and no longer here to give them countenance, I have scarcely yet ventured to enquire; for though I will not be weak enough to pretend an ignorance of their occasional merits, I am too conscious of their numerous errors and defects to suppose that posterity will trouble their heads much about them."

"Indeed, indeed, my noble host," rejoined Montchensey, kindling into unusual animation as he spoke, "you much too lightly estimate the value of your own works. Without arrogating to myself any deep insight into futurity, I think I may venture to predict, that a day will arrive when this inattention of yours will be a theme of universal regret."

"Say you so, my kind critic?" returned his somewhat astonished auditor, his mind momentarily sinking into reverie, whilst his eye flashed at the same instant with an intelligence

that seemed penetrating the secrets of time; "Say you so," he repeated; then starting as it were from the vision before him, he added in a more subdued tone, and with a look in which the most benevolent sweetness was yet mingled with a portion of subsiding enthusiasm, "if life and health be vouchsafed me, I will endeavour not to forget your suggestion. It is, indeed, but too true that much has been given to me, both on the stage, and from the press, which I have never written, and much too has been sacrificed on my part, the necessary penalty of my profession, to please the popular ear; and for all which, I must likewise allow, the bare process of omission would be a ready cure. But the attempt, to meet the evil as it should be met, is not just now in my power; for a great part of what I have produced is still the property of the theatre, and though my late fellows, Heminge and Condell, would, I have no doubt, do what they could to further my wishes, yet neither does the matter rest entirely on their shoulders, nor would their co-partners, and the stationers connected with them, relinquish, at the present period, their share of the expected profits, without

a compensation too extravagant for me to think of. Yet a time may come when I shall more easily regain the control over my own offspring which I have now lost; and if it should not, you will recollect that I am no critic like my friend Ben Jonson; that, with the exception of his plays, mine partake but a common fate with those of my contemporaries, and that, moreover, it is very probable the revision you wish for, should it pass, as in all likelihood it would, beyond the mere measure of blotting out, might in many instances injure the effect of what had been happily produced in the careless fervour of the moment. Besides, I must freely confess to you, that retirement from the stage and all its concerns has long been a favourite object with me. My life has been one of bustle and fatigue, and, occasionally of gaiety and dissipation; as an actor, I never felt myself sufficiently important to be fond of the occupation, and though the hours spent in composition were attended with pleasures great and peculiar to themselves, and have been abundantly rewarded by the public, I may, I think, without any charge of ingra-

titude, be permitted to remark, that even in this way I have done enough."

Montchensey was about to express in very strong terms his regret at this determination, when a slender voice at the door, accompanied by a gentle rap, interrupted the conversation, and Shakspeare, starting from his seat, caught his little grandchild in his arms, and, turning to his companion, exclaimed, "It is here, Sir, in the bosom of my family, and aloof from all that may interfere with domestic comfort, and the society of a few old friends whom time has spared me, that I hope to spend the remainder of my days." Then kissing the little Elizabeth, who had been sent to say that dinner was nearly ready, he dismissed the child, and proposed an attendance upon the ladies.

It was, in fact, on the stroke of twelve, for Montchensey, as an invalid, had spent the greater part of the morning in his chamber, and at the period of which we write, this was esteemed a late, and, therefore, a fashionable time for dinner, which in the days of the Queen had been usually taken an hour sooner.

They found Mrs. Shakspeare, Mrs. Hall, Judith Shakspeare, and Helen Montchensey assembled to receive them. They were momentarily expecting the arrival of Dr. Hall. And here we may be allowed the opportunity of inserting a slight sketch of New-Place and its inhabitants, as drawn by the lively pen of Helen Montchensey, in a letter addressed to one of her favourite and earliest companions.

“ You will have heard, my beloved Agnes,” she writes, “ from my father’s letter to your uncle, of the accident which has detained us in this place, and of our introduction to New-Place, the residence of our great dramatic bard, William Shakspeare. But as my father’s enthusiasm in every thing which personally relates to this incomparable man, has, I well know, from the necessarily brief limits of such a communication, confined his epistle nearly, if not altogether, to a delineation of the features and manners of his kind host, I will now endeavour to complete the picture, and to satisfy your curiosity, by a description both of the poet’s house and his family, omitting, of course, every thing you

have already obtained from the letter to your uncle.

“ New-Place then, originally built, I understand, in the reign of Henry the Seventh, owes its modern and handsome appearance to its present possessor, who, though he purchased it more than twenty years ago, has only very lately, from his engagements in London, been able to reside in it. It is, with the exception of the College, a mansion belonging to a family of the name of Combe, the best and largest house in Stratford, and is situated in the principal street.

“ A porch, supported by two pillars on a base of three steps, and having its architrave, as masons term this part of a building, decorated with the poet's arms, conducts you to the house, which is now distinguished from most in the town by being fronted entirely of brick, instead of brick and timber, its former state, and possessing the additional ornament of stone coigns. The windows, which are light and large, and what builders call *bays* in respect of form, are five in number, one over the porch, and two,

ranging one above the other, on each side of it; whilst surmounting the cornice, and occupying the greater part of the front roof, are three gables, or triangular uprights, with a window in each.

“ I am afraid you will laugh, my dear Agnes, at the minuteness of this architectural detail; but you must prepare yourself, I do assure you, in spite of all the ridicule I may incur by the attempt, to endure a still more minute depiction, as well of the interior of the mansion, as of its tenants; for I have caught, I will allow, no small portion of my father’s admiration for his poetical friend, and I do verily begin to believe, as he firmly assures me, that however careless the present age may be as to the personal history of the bard, a time will come, when, from the acknowledged superiority of his genius, every the most trifling anecdote concerning him and his connections will be sought after with avidity. I am the more willing to credit and encourage this tone of enthusiasm, as not only does my love for the writings of Shakspeare, which, under the influence of my father, I have imbibed even from my very childhood, induce me to cherish

such an expectation, but I have now the strong additional motive of a personal acquaintance with the poet, to bind the impression on my heart. For I solemnly protest to you, my sweet Agnes, that I do not think a more amiable or benevolent being exists than the author of 'Romeo and Juliet,' a declaration which, as I know how greatly you admire that play, will, I am sure, delight you. In no respect, indeed, does he arrogate to himself any deference or distinction; in fact, he appears to me perfectly unconscious of the magnitude and universality of his own genius: and so cheerful and so untemper, so utterly void of stiffness and constraint in all he says and does: in one word so true and entirely the possessor of the most and noblest sense of the worth that I scarcely think it possible, even for the most young and inexperienced, to be much in his company without entertaining an affection for him. You will not be surprised, therefore, to learn that in this our native town and neighbourhood, he is in all respects of some and esteem to all classes: to great and gay, to rich and poor: and that, of course, some times out of ten, as might be expected from the factitious

of his manners, the splendour of the poet is almost forgotten in attachment to the man.

“ If any further motive were wanting on my part, my Agnes, for a more than common admiration of the genius and character of Shakspeare, it would be from the consideration of the happy influence of both over the spirits of my poor father, whose domestic sorrows, you well know, have been such as greatly, and, I fear, permanently, to injure his health. I have not for years seen him so cheerful and abstracted from care, notwithstanding the pain arising from his accident, as since he has been a resident at New-Place; and deeply, indeed, shall I feel indebted to the bard, if, by the goodness of Providence, he should prove instrumental towards the restoration of my father’s peace of mind; for I should have told you, my love, that vivacious and full of humour as is the general cast of Shakspeare’s temper, and much as we have heard of the frolic achievements of his younger days, and much as he must necessarily have mixed with the gayest spirits of the age, he is yet, I am well assured, by those who know him best, as remarkable for the piety as

for the cheerfulness of his disposition, a feature in his character which, connected, as it is, with great and acknowledged splendour of mind, cannot fail to give him an almost irresistible influence over the perturbations of sorrow, or the conscience-stricken feelings of remorse.

“ Under these powerful incentives to the love and veneration of our host, you will not, I am persuaded, be surprised at the importance which I attach to every thing connected with himself or his friends; nor that I threaten to resume in my next letter the very minute sketch which I have attempted to begin in this of the poor's house and family. I feel indeed, and I pray you to pardon the presumption of such an idea, as if he were, somehow or other, connected with the destiny of our house: a belief which has originated, I have no doubt, in the very beneficial effect which his society appears to have produced on the thoughts and prospects of my father.

“ I will only add, that nothing has transpired since we left the Hall, with regard to poor Hubert Grey, on whose account, as you well

know, I have suffered, and still suffer, so many unhappy moments. Farewell, my beloved Agnes, I pray to God to have you in his good keeping: soon shall you hear again from

“Your affectionate

“HELEN MONTCHENSEY.”

(To be continued.)

No. III.

Avon, thy rural views, thy pastures wild,
The willows that o'erhang thy twilight edge,
Their boughs entangling with th' embattled sedge ;
Thy brink with watery foliage quaintly fringed,
Thy surface with reflected verdure tinged ;
Soothe me with many a pensive pleasure mild,
Whilst still I muse, that here the bard divine,
Whose sacred dust yon high arch'd ile inclose,
Where the tall windows rise in stately rows
Above th' embowering shade,
Here first, at Fancy's fairy-circled shrine,
Of daisies pied his infant offering made.

WARTON.

It was not long before Helen Montchensey fulfilled the promise which she had made to her friend, and resumed the description of New-Place so circumstantially commenced in her former letter.

“ You will recollect, my sweet Agnes,” she continues, “ that I left you in my last on the

threshold of the poet's house; and I shall now open my picture of the interior, by recalling to your remembrance my father's account of his interview with Shakspeare in his library, as it was the first day on which, owing to his indisposition, and my close attendance upon him in his chamber, that we had an opportunity of dining with the family below.

“ I was ushered, on reaching the vestibule, into a handsome room, situated on the left of the porch as you enter the house; it was hung with rich tapestry, representing the Defeat of the Spanish Armada, and the floor was strewed with some of the finest rushes I have ever seen; whilst in the chimney and bay window were placed, in profusion, a variety of sweet smelling herbs and flowers. Immediately opposite the door stands a large cypress chest of great beauty, elevated on lofty feet, and curiously embossed on the top and sides with scroll-work, and emblematical devices. The chairs are cane-backed with Turkey cushions of the newest fashion, and over the chimney-piece, in frame work richly carved, is a portrait, by Van Somer, of his present Majesty, from whom, it is said, the poet has had

the honour of receiving a complimentary letter written with his own hand.

“ Here were Mrs. Shakspeare and her two daughters; the former, who is, I understand, nearly eight years older than her husband, and was married to him when he was but eighteen, appears to be approaching towards sixty; and, though thus far advanced in life, still retain some strong traces of having once been eminently beautiful. She was simply but becomingly dressed in a French hood, and moderately sized ruff, a gown of light grey silk, with a black velvet cape slightly embroidered with bugelles, had bracelets on her arms, and an ivory-handled fan of ostrich feathers in her hand. My attention, however, was almost instantly attracted to her eldest daughter, Mrs. Hall, whose features strongly resemble those of her father; and though not regularly handsome, possess a degree of combined sweetness and intelligence which cannot but prepossess every individual in her favour. A smile of the most bewitching expression played upon her lips as I entered the room, and gave the utmost effect to a style of dress singularly tasteful and elegant. A caul or net

of silver thread was thrown over her glossy tresses, and on this were obliquely placed several artificial seed-pods, which were represented open, with rows of pearls for seeds. An open ruff of web-like lawn, a necklace of pearls, and a gown of fawn-coloured muslin, over which was worn a kirtle or mantle of dark brown satin bordered with lace, will complete the portrait of my favourite Susanna; especially when I add, that she inherits a portion of her father's wit and humour, that, in her person, she is somewhat tall and full, but highly lovely and graceful; and, as to age, not much, I should imagine, beyond the period of thirty.

“ Judith, the younger by a year or two, I am informed, and who is about to be married to a gentleman of this place of the name of Quiney, wore her hair, according to the custom of our sisterhood, uncovered, knotted, and raised high at the forehead. She had on a gown of Lincoln-green, fitted close to the body, with cut sleeves, and with a very long and pointed bodice. Her ruff, which was large, and stiffened with straw-coloured starch, was curiously plaited; she exhibited a slender chain of gold, pendent

from her neck; had on a petticoat of white taffety, wrought with vine leaves round the bottom, and wore perfumed gloves. In her stature she is rather short, more reserved in her disposition than Mrs. Hall, and less pleasing and intellectual in her countenance.

“ Having thus endeavoured to satisfy your curiosity, my sweet friend, by a minute description of the personal appearance of these ladies, who, independent of their own merit, I cannot but consider as objects of peculiar interest from their intimate connection with our bard, I go on to say, that very shortly after Shakspeare and my father joined our party, arrived Dr. Hall, of whom I will only add, that though not a little stiff in his person, and somewhat pedantic in his conversation, for which he has often undergone the good-humoured raillery of his father-in-law, he is reported to be kind and charitable in his disposition, and in general estimation for his professional skill.

“ I must now beg you to follow us with your mind's eye into the dining parlour, situated on the opposite side of the vestibule. This room, which is wainscotted with beautifully veined

oak, corresponds in size with that we have just quitted, and is enlivened by several pictures, some of the most valuable of which are protected by curtains of green silk. One over the chimney-piece particularly attracted my attention, being a very fine half length of Queen Elizabeth, by her favourite painter, Hilliard. Under this is suspended the poet's sword, in a crimson velvet-covered scabbard braced with gold. Another very splendid ornament to this parlour, consists of a cupboard of plate, among which I particularly distinguished a large silver gilt bowl.* Shakspeare appears, indeed, owing probably to his intimacy with some in the first ranks of society, and especially his munificent friend, the Earl of Southampton, to have early adopted several of the most delicate and pleasing improvements which have lately found their way into domestic life. We found the table, for instance, instead of being dressed, as usual, with carpet-cloth, covered with fine damask linen; forks, an invention, you know, of only three or

* This piece of plate, which the poet bequeathed to his daughter Judith, is described in his will as "my broad silver gilt bowl."

four years' standing, were placed for each individual, and trenchers of pewter were in every instance discarded for china or porcelaine.

“ Yet though neatness and elegance prevailed throughout, there was nothing of extravagance or ostentation in our entertainment, nothing, in short, beyond the character of the independent country gentleman ; and, as a proof of this, I will just mention, in as brief a manner as possible, that our dinner consisted in the *first* course of stewed trout, a couple of boiled capons, a swan roasted with gallantine sauce, a shield of brawn, carbonadoed tongues, and an olave pye ; and in the *second*, of pigeons and young peahens, with pastry, creams, and confections. As the afternoon was one of the loveliest of June, we took our banquet or dessert, which included march-pane *, marmalades, dates, and cherries, in an arbour in the poet's garden, and I must add, though rather out of my province, that the wines, numerous according to the fashion of the

* March-pane was a species of sweet cake, composed of sugar and almonds, and therefore very similar to the modern macaroons. It was an almost invariable article at the tables of our ancestors, during the reigns of Elizabeth and James the First.

day, were, in the home-made class, ipocras*, and bracket; in the foreign, Zeres sack, claret, muscadine, and Elstertune Rhenish.

“ I scarcely ever remember to have passed a pleasanter day than this; for my father, delighted by the good-humour, and conversational powers of his kind host, seemed to have forgotten all his cares and sorrows. Indeed every thing conspired to gratify his feelings; the beauty of the garden, planted by the hand of Shakspeare, the perfume of the roses, the melody of the birds, the blue serenity of the heavens, accompanied as they were by a responding cheerfulness on the features of all around him, could not fail to dissipate all sad-

* This was, indeed, a spiced, rather than a home-made wine, and was a great favourite with our forefathers. The following is Gervase Markham's receipt, written probably about 1616, for the composition of it. “ Take a gallon of claret or white wine, and put therein four ounces of ginger, an ounce and a half of nut-megs, of cloves one quarter, of sugar four pound; let all this stand together in a pot at least twelve hours, then take it, and put it into a clean bag made for the purpose, so that the wine may come with good leisure from the spices.” — *English House-Wife*, Ninth edition, p. 103.

The bag used on this occasion was a woollen one, termed by the apothecaries Hippocrates' Sleeve, whence the name of the wine.

ness not rooted in despair. It was, in truth, a most lovely and soothing sight to behold this incomparable bard, this unrivalled master of the human passions, thus enjoying, with the utmost simplicity and gaiety of heart, the society of his family and friends; for we were joined, shortly after we had reached the arbour, by his cousin Thomas Greene, a barrister in Chancery, but resident in Stratford, and by Mr. Quiney the admirer of Judith; whilst, at the same time, couched at his feet, and courting his ever ready smile, sate two of the sweetest children I have ever seen, his little god-son William Walker, a boy seven years of age, and his grand-daughter Elizabeth Hall.

“After a conversation perfectly easy and unrestrained, yet enlivened by many playful sallies, and in which Mrs. Hall took a conspicuous part, we left the arbour, which I should not forget to tell you, was closely shaded from the sun by the graceful foliage of a grape-vine, to wander through the garden walks. These, which have been newly laid out under the direction of the poet, are partly open, and partly close, either bordered with flower-beds, or

shadowed by fruit-trees, and amongst the latter is one of the lately imported mulberry trees, with which, as well from his own taste and inclination, as from deference to the circular letters of his Majesty, he has embellished the termination of his garden. This elegant tree, which was planted by Shakspeare's own hand, and is now six years old, thrives well, and promises to become a very useful and distinguished ornament to his pleasure-ground. It was the first, he told us, which had been seen in the place or neighbourhood; and, if I may be allowed to turn prophet on the occasion, I would venture to predict, that long after the present generation has ceased to breathe, it will be held in veneration for the poet's sake.

“ The weather being singularly fine, we were induced to linger in the open air until near six o'clock, when, after evening prayer, supper was announced, and, as soon as this was finished, we adjourned to the tapestried parlour. Here, in music and conversation, the hours passed unperceived away. A Welsh harp, and the virginals *

* *Virginals*, a musical instrument something similar to a small harpsichord, or what was formerly in use under the name

were in the room, and I was induced by Ham-
 speare, who is, as you would naturally suppose,
 enthusiastically fond of music. In regard to the
 former, as being my favourite instrument. I
 fortunately recollected that there is an interesting pas-
 sage in his *Tragedy of Titus*, where he makes the
 Duke exclaim —

' Give me some music : — but that piece of song
 That old and antique song we heard last night:
 Mark it, Casario; it is rich and pure :
 The spinsters and the scullions in the hall
 And the free maids, that wash their brows with
 bones,
 Do use to chaunt it : —

and I instantly sang to my lady that old and
 popular ditty,

' It was the first of winter morn
 As he forth walked in the sun.

for which I felt so happy rewarded by the smiles
 and approval of the queen, that I ventured to

of a spinnet. It was the favourite instrument of Queen Elizabeth. — Vide Shakespeare and his Times, vol. i. p. 131.

concluding it, to present him with one of his own exquisite songs,

‘ Where the bee sucks, there suck I,’

just set by my favourite composer, Orlando Gibbons. I will not repeat the gratifying things which fell from our host on this occasion; but shall only add, that after several beautiful madrigals from Mrs. Hall, whose voice is singularly sweet and clear, among which I was particularly struck with that lovely song of her father’s,

‘ Take, oh take those lips away,’

so admirably set by Byrd, we retired for the night, having previously, however, as is still the fashion, you know, in the country, partaken of a rich posset, served up in the large silver gilt bowl, which I mentioned to you as one of the ornaments of the dining-room.

“ You will now think it high time, I apprehend, my beloved Agnes, that I should conclude this prodigious long letter; but I was desirous of giving you an unbroken detail of the occurrences of the first day which my father and

myself had an opportunity of spending *together* with our new friends. The interest which I know, in your contemplation, and that of your uncle, attaches itself to every thing connected with the person and family of Shakspeare, must plead my excuse for this prolixity. What has occurred here since the day I have thus minutely described, and I can assure you our time has not been idly spent, you shall have when I see you at Wyeburne Hall. We prosecute our journey thither in a few days, and as a temptation to hasten to your friend which cannot fail of having its due effect, I will just add, that it is highly probable we shall soon be honoured with a visit from our dear and amiable bard.

“Farewell, my sweet cousin, and continue to love her who doth most exceedingly love you.

“HELEN MONTCHENSEY.”

Of the occurrences alluded to in the above letters, as taking place between the period of Montchensey's mingling with the family at New-Place, and his departure for Wyeburne Hall, we shall now proceed to give some account, merely observing in this place, that if Helen

had deferred her communication a few days longer, she would have found something still more attractive to Agnes, and much more allied to her own fortunes and feelings to expatiate upon, than what had been the subject of her late correspondence, however curious and interesting it had proved.

Shakspeare had felt, as we have already remarked, extremely anxious to lighten the load which seemed to press with so much weight upon the spirits of his elder guest; and now that he was able to enter into society, he endeavoured by occasional company, and, as far as his reviving strength would permit, by short excursions in Stratford and its neighbourhood, to divert the current of his thoughts. As nothing, however, so effectually contributed to abstract Montchensey from his own affairs, as what more immediately related to the person and character of his host, the latter submitted, though somewhat reluctantly, to become, every now and then, his own historian.

“Yes, my friend,” returned the bard, in answer to a question put by Montchensey, as they one morning sauntered along Henley Street,

“ if posterity should ever enquire about such a personage as myself, it may be told that here,” pointing to an ancient and somewhat homely-looking tenement, “ he drew the first breath of life, and passed his childhood, and his early youth.” “ And may we be allowed,” cried Helen, her fine eyes sparkling with enthusiasm, and turned upon Shakspeare, as if imploring his consent, “ may we be allowed to cross this hallowed threshold ?” “ If vanity, my fair young flatterer,” he replied, “ were not the prescriptive inmate of the poet’s breast, you would, without all question, plant it there. It is hallowed, however, in my estimation, my dear lady, by the memory of a man of worth ; for it was beneath this humble roof that my father lived and died, and maintained a family of eight children.* I am the eldest and last surviving son, and it is a source of inexpressible comfort to me to reflect, that I was able through the patronage of the public to render his latter days easy and

* “ Our poet’s mother,” says Mr. Malone, “ never appears to have borne to her husband more than *eight* children, *five* of whom only, namely, four sons and one daughter, attained to years of maturity.”—Vide MALONE’S *Shakspeare*, apud Boswell, vol. ii. p. 51.

independent. It is now about fourteen years since I lost him, and I revisit this house, which I have taken care to preserve nearly in the state in which he left it, with sensations which, if somewhat different from those with which you are kindly pleased to view it, my gentle lady, yet leave me, I trust, a wiser and a better man."

"Ah! my dear Sir," cried Helen blushing, yet with a deep expression of admiration on her features, "you must permit me to say, that he was *your* Shakspeare, whilst *you* are *everybody's* Shakspeare." "It is smartly and eloquently put, my sweet Ellen," rejoined the poet, smiling, whilst the hectic of a moment cross'd his cheek, "but, conscious as I am of my own deficiencies, I dare not trust the picture which the glow of your too partial imagination would place before me; — but let us enter."

"I have heard," remarked Montchensey, sitting down in an old oak armed chair, and surveying the apartment into which they had been admitted with no slight interest, "I have heard, though I know not how truly, that Mr. John Shakspeare was in the woollen trade." "His principal occupation, Master Montchen-

sey," returned the bard, "was that of a glover* ; and though in reduced circumstances when I first left Stratford for London, owing in a great measure to the pressure of a large family, of which, I am sorry to say, I was then a very thoughtless and extravagant member yet had he formerly lived in comparative affluence, having filled the office of High Bailiff for his native town ; and with pride and pleasure can I add, that not only when fortune favoured him, did he perform the duties of a man and a magistrate with promptitude and effect, but that in the hour of adversity he exerted every nerve to support with decency a numerous offspring."

A tear trembled on the cheek of Shakspeare as he uttered these last words, and Montchensy, anxious to avert what might, in the slightest degree, give pain, enquired if the school where he had been educated were yet in existence. "I will show it you," he replied, "as we

* This has been satisfactorily ascertained by Mr. Malone from a very ancient manuscript account of the proceedings in the bailiff's court at Stratford. — See his *Shakspeare*, apud Boswell, vol. ii. p. 78.

return, for it stands very near New-Place, occupying, indeed, the upper part of the Guild-hall, just beyond the Chapel of the Holy Cross, whose porch and windows you admired so much."

"And it was here, my friend," exclaimed Montchensey, as they entered the school-room, "that you passed the short period allowed you for scholastic exercises! for, I presume, from what you hinted the other day in your library, that the term of your education was but brief."

"It lasted not quite four years," returned the bard, "and this is the very spot," placing his hand upon a large ink-stained and somewhat mutilated desk, "where my scanty stock of Greek and Latin was acquired; for my father, whose circumstances were then becoming embarrassed, not only found himself unable to continue me longer here, but wanted moreover my assistance in his trade; and from the age of twelve to that of eighteen, I was, or ought to have been, engaged in the concerns of his business."

"Not, I will venture to assert, however," cried Montchensey, "without many intervals

devoted to more genial pursuits, to the play of fancy, and the love of song."

"I was, indeed, an idle dog, Master Montchensey," replied Shakspeare, archly smiling, "a very idle dog, and greatly more addicted, I must confess, to sport and pleasure, than to any more serious or profitable occupation. An event, however, which happened very shortly after I left this school, contributed materially not only to foster this disposition for a time, but to predispose me to the way of life which I afterward pursued on quitting Stratford. This was no other than the magnificent festival given by the Earl of Leicester on the Queen's visit to his castle of Kenilworth, which, as being only a few miles distant from Stratford, I was allowed by my father, in company, indeed, with most of the youth of this place and the neighbourhood, to attend. I was placed, however, under the protection of an old harper, who had, in his younger days, been a servant with my father, a man grey with age, but skilled in the use of his instrument; and nothing would serve me but I must go accoutred as his page, a fancy

which, as it turned out, proved of no small service to my future lot in life.

“ The scene which now burst upon my opening mind can never, Master Montchensey, as long as memory retains her function, be effaced from it. The pomp and splendour of the pageantry, and, above all, the dramatic cast of the greater part of the entertainments, absolutely fascinated, and, I may say, absorbed my imagination ; for, not only was I present with the country round, at the old Coventry play of Hock Tuesday, but I was admitted, with my friend, the harper, whose services had been required on the occasion, to see the play which, the same evening, after supper, was performed more privately before the Queen. And here I had the good fortune to attract the notice of her majesty, who probably struck with the tenderness of my years, and the fanciful dress which I had assumed, was pleased to enquire who I was, and whence I came, a circumstance which, when in after life I had acquired some little publicity as a dramatic writer, brought the name of Will Shakspeare to her ear, with associations which, inducing her to ascertain if the page and the

poet were the same, more readily disposed her to patronise the interests of the latter."

"It was an incident, my dear Sir," interrupted Helen, "most happily adapted to awaken the sympathies of our late noble Queen, who, with all her masculine and statesman-like talents, had a strong bias for whatever was tinged with the romantic. You must allow me, nevertheless, to remark, that however this discovery of identity might at first heighten the interest which she felt in your favour, it could only be to the superiority of acknowledged genius that you were indebted for her marked and continued support."

Shakspeare bowed, whilst Montchensey reverting to the effect of what had been related on the youthful mind of the poet, observed, that in his opinion, nothing could have happened better calculated to fan the opening flame of genius, than the spectacle and incident at Kenilworth; "and I can easily conceive," he added, "that after this period, however duty and necessity might demand an attention to business, inclination was but little subservient to the call."

"As the matter ultimately turned out, my friend," replied Shakspeare, "all was well;

yet I cannot now look back upon this portion of my life without many a pang of compunction and regret, nor without thinking it right to add, that the conduct which I too often pursued during these my juvenile years would, nine times out of ten, lead, as it had nearly done in my own case, to poverty and disgrace. In saying this, however, I must beg to be understood as not charging myself, setting one foolish enterprise aside, with any thing more formidable than too frequently neglecting the interests of my father's business for the gratification of my own youthful pleasures. In short, to ramble through the woods and fields, to trace the banks of the Avon as far as my legs would carry me, to loiter in the noon-tide heat beneath the shelter of some aged oak, absorbed in my own wayward fancies, or to join with more than common enthusiasm in the sports and frolics of the young and thoughtless, were indulgences to which I sacrificed not only a great part of my time from the period of twelve to fifteen, but, with contrition do I say it, much too large a portion of the next three years; so that at the age of little more than eighteen, my father, anxious for the consequences of such

a desultory mode of life, was induced to sanction a partiality which I had for some time entertained for a young woman in this neighbourhood, about eight years older than myself, under the hope that, as a husband and a father, I should feel the necessity of becoming more attentive to the concerns of business."

"If I might venture, without offence, to form a conjecture as to the issue of this engagement," remarked Montchensey, as descending from the grammar-school, they turned to re-enter New-Place, "I would say, that though, as might be expected from the poet of 'Venus and Adonis,' you proved an ardent disciple of the tender passion, and, no doubt, a faithful and affectionate husband, yet, as to business, the experiment did not altogether succeed."

"I cannot say it did," returned the bard, somewhat archly surveying both Montchensey and his daughter, whilst on the countenance of the latter dwelt a smile of the most enchanting playfulness; "and I rather suspect that you are better acquainted with my juvenile adventures than I had imagined. Yet I can assure you, that though at an age when love and liberty are

objects of dearest estimation, I had formed, on entering into the marriage state, such a serious determination to direct all the talents I possessed to business, that not satisfied with merely assisting my father in his own peculiar line, I endeavoured, as an additional means of supporting a family, to acquire a knowledge of a lucrative branch of the law; and, in fact, through the aid of a near relative, himself a member of the legal profession, I became in a little time sufficiently versed in what is termed the *Art of Conveyancing*, as to have rendered it, but for some untoward circumstances, a source of no inconsiderable emolument."

"Ah! my dear Sir," cried Helen, laughing, and encouraged by the sly expression of humour which mantled on the features of the poet as he closed the above detail, "you will pardon me, I am sure, if in alluding to what fame has recorded of this frolic period of your life, I venture to remind you, that, in the opinion of your neighbour Sir Thomas Lucy, you carried your newly-acquired art of conveyancing somewhat beyond the limits which either he or his brethren in the magistracy could approve!"

“ A mad exploit, my young friend,” rejoined the bard, “ and one which even the ebullition of youth, and the warmth of an undisciplined imagination, can scarcely palliate, much less excuse. It was my misfortune, indeed, at this period, to have formed an intimacy with several lawless and hair-brained spirits, and the incursion which they proposed was but too accordant with that love of the wild and adventurous which had for some years animated my breast, and played before my fancy, to be rejected with the indignation which it merited. I can well remember, in fact, that it struck me in the light of one of those bold achievements I had read of in the predatory warfare of ancient times, and the danger it involved served only to recommend it the more.”*

* Notwithstanding all that Mr. Malone has brought forward to prove that no park existed, either at Charlecote or Fulbroke in Shakspeare's time, I cannot help thinking that the story of our poet's frolic must, from the universality and iteration of the tradition connected with it, have had some foundation in truth. “ It is,” as Mr. Malone himself has observed, “ an old and just observation, that *omnis fabula fundatur in historia*; the most fictitious accounts which tradition has handed down to us, have generally had some little resemblance or admixture of truth in them.”—(Vol. ii. p. 72.) I am therefore inclined to believe,

As Shakspeare uttered these words they reached the threshold of New-Place; and being all engaged to dinner at Mr. Combe's, of Strat-

that Sir Thomas Lucy, though he never possessed a legal park, had yet deer within enclosed grounds; and that Shakspeare was proceeded against by, or threatened with, an action of trespass for his misdemeanour. It should also be observed, that when Mr. Malone declares that this mode of accrediting the story is scarcely worth considering, for that "of keeping deer in *unenclosed* grounds no example can be produced," he seems to have forgotten the import of a passage which he has quoted from Blackstone in the preceding page, who expressly says, "the word park, properly signifies an enclosure: but yet it is not every field or common, which a gentleman chooses to surround with a wall or paling, and to stock with a herd of deer, that is thereby constituted a *legal* park;" an observation which evidently implies, not only that such a *species of enclosed lands* for keeping deer, though in the eye of the law considered as *unenclosed*, had occurred, but that it had also not unfrequently occurred. We are likewise told by Mr. Malone, in a previous part of his volume, (p. 191.) that in parliament Sir Thomas Lucy "was very active in the preservation of the game," an activity not very likely to have existed, unless he was, in some way or other, immediately interested in the protection of it, but which will very sufficiently account for what Mr. Malone has remarked, that "the first scene of the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, certainly affords ground for believing that our author, on some account or other, had not the most profound respect for Sir Thomas Lucy."—Vol. ii. p. 141.

The frequency also of this kind of depredation in the days of Shakspeare, and the moral light in which it was considered by his contemporaries, add further credence to the story.

ford College, Helen had only time, ere she retired to make some alteration in her dress, to petition her kind host that they might visit the

“ To form a right judgment,” says Mr. Malone, “ on this, as on many other subjects, it is necessary to take into our consideration the prevalent opinions and practices of the time. If these be attended to, in the present case, the act which has been imputed to our poet, however unjustifiable, will rather appear in the light of a youthful indiscretion, in which light it is frequently represented, than as a very criminal offence. That it was a common practice among the young men of those days, and being wholly unmixed with any sordid or lucrative motive, (for the venison thus obtained was not sold, but freely participated at a convivial board,) was considered merely a juvenile frolic, may be inferred from a passage in a tract of that age, where it is classed with the other ordinary levities and amusements of youth. ‘ Time of recreation,’ (says a writer against stage plays in 1599,) ‘ is necessarie, I graunt, and thinke as necessarie for scholars, that are scholars in deede, as it is for any. Yet in my opinion it were not fit for them to play at stoule-ball among wenches, nor at chance or maw with idle loose companions, nor at trunkes in guile-halls, nor to danse about may-poles, nor to ruffle in ale houses, nor to carouse in tavernes, nor to *steale deere*, nor to rob orchards.’ — (*Overthrow of Stage Plaies*, 4to. 1599. p. 23.) In like manner, Anthony Wood, speaking of Dr. John Thornborough, who was admitted a member of Magdalen College in Oxford, in 1570, at the age of eighteen, and was successively bishop of Limerick, in Ireland, and bishop of Bristol and Worcester, in England, informs us, that ‘ he and his kinsman, Robert Pinkney, seldom studied or gave themselves to their bookes; but spent their time in the *fencing-schools*, and *dancing-schools*, in *stealing deer* and *conies*, in *hunting the hare*,

next morning Charlecote and its deer-park, as the scene of an adventure which, in its ultimate consequences, had contributed so essentially not only to his own prosperity, but to the very being and perfection of dramatic poetry in England; a request which, we may well conceive, from the channel through which it came, and from the mode in which it was enforced, could only be assented to by the poet with the utmost cordiality and good humour.

Stratford College, erected in the reign of Edward the Third, by Ralph de Stratford, afterwards bishop of London, was now the mansion and residence of William Combe, Esq. the nephew of John Combe, who had died the year before, who had been the friend, and often the companion of Shakspeare. The present pos-

and wooing girls.'—(*Athen. Oxon.* i. 371.) At the time here referred to, Thornborough was a bachelor of arts, and twenty-two years old."

Various other passages to the same effect are given by Mr. Malone, who remarks as the result of the whole, that "it is clear, therefore, that this kind of trespass, even were it justly imputable to Shakspeare, would not leave any very deep stain on his character, being, in his time, considered merely as a playful 'trick of youth.'"—Vol. ii. p. 152 et seq.

essor, who was about thirty years of age, was a man of estimable character and amiable manners, and a warm admirer also of the talents and the virtues of Shakspeare, who cherished both for him and his younger brother Thomas a very sincere regard, and now spoke of them to Montchensey, as they proceeded towards the College, in terms of affectionate friendship.

This venerable building, constructed of hewn free-stone, and of considerable strength and size, was situated on the west side of the church-yard, and, being not destitute of architectural beauty, and surrounded by extensive pleasure-grounds and gardens, was justly considered as an ornament to the town. The east, or principal entrance, was under a massy porch or door-way, opening into a spacious hall extending the whole length of the central front, vaulted to the roof, and its coving richly ornamented with stucco-work; whilst the north wing, which, previous to the dissolution, had been occupied by the warden and officiating priests, was now arranged into three ample apartments, a withdrawing room, a banqueting room, and a library. Into the first of these were Shakspeare, his family

and friends, introduced, and here they had the pleasure of meeting Lord Carew of Clopton, and his lady, Sir Thomas Stafford, his lordship's natural son, then upon a visit to Clopton House, and Dr. and Mrs Hall.

It was a spectacle truly gratifying to Montchensey and his daughter, to witness the cordiality and pleasure with which Shakspeare was welcomed, not only by his intimate friends, the Combes, but by the noble family of Clopton, who seemed, from their marked attention to the poet, to show how well they could appreciate the value of his great and incomparable talents. Nor was Montchensey himself a total stranger either to Mr. Combe, whom he had more than once seen at Warwick, or to the visitors from Clopton House, as during a residence in Ireland in the year 1600, in a military capacity, he had become acquainted with Sir Thomas Stafford, then secretary to his father, Sir George Carew, as president of Munster. A recognition was soon established; and Shakspeare then stepping forward, introduced his lovely guest, the fair and blushing Helen, to the admiration of his friends. He had claimed this as his delightful

and peculiar privilege, and it was, indeed, a sight more than commonly attractive, to behold beauty thus led on by genius of unrivalled lustre.

It was scarcely possible, indeed, to see Helen Montchensey without being interested in her favour, such was the fascinating, and at the same time the intelligent expression of her features; but it was to the sweetness of her disposition, and the unaffected simplicity of her manners, that she owed her influence over the mind of Shakspeare, who seemed to contemplate in her a living counterpart of what his fancy had formed whilst sketching the bewitching portraits of Viola and Fidele.

To be thus the avowed favourite of the man beyond all others skilled in the knowledge of the human heart, was, in itself, a powerful recommendation to all; but, when enforced by female loveliness, irresistible. There was one, however, by whom the scene was viewed with feelings peculiarly his own; for how shall we paint the proud gratification of the father, when he beheld him whom he had long enthusiastically venerated as first among the sons of men for creative energy of talent, thus present-

ing his beloved daughter to the notice and approbation of his best and most valued acquaintance !

With the exception of Lord Southampton, there were few noblemen, perhaps, better qualified by their taste and literature, and experience of life, and none more willing, from an intimacy with the virtues of the man, to do justice to the merits of Shakspeare, than was Lord Carew. He had ever been also peculiarly susceptible to the attractions of the softer sex ; but to pay homage to beauty from the hand of Shakspeare, formed a duty singularly novel and interesting, and which he discharged with more than his wonted courtesy and grace.

Nor could any thing be more friendly or hospitably kind than the conduct and civilities of Mr. and Mrs. Combe, who, while they paid all due respect to fortune, rank, and title, were at the same time most assiduously attentive to Shakspeare, conscious how far beyond wealth or heraldic distinction were the deathless honours of their humble townsman. This was a sentiment, indeed, even in that stately and almost feudal age of magnificence, common, as hath

been already observed, to nearly all the inhabitants of Stratford and its neighbourhood; for the excellence of Shakspeare had been in a line of composition familiar to their business and their bosoms; and so mild, so kind, and unassuming were his manners, that it was difficult to decide whether he was more the love or the pride of their hearts.

Dinner was now announced, and at half-past twelve the party at the college sate down in the banqueting room to an elegant and a varied board. The conversation soon took an interesting turn, and among many topics connected with the localities of the place and neighbourhood, that of the fire which had the preceding year threatened the very existence of the town, and had been, of course, productive of incalculable distress, became the subject of discussion. The ravages of this dreadful conflagration, which in less than two hours had consumed fifty-four houses, were still in many places but too apparent, and had forcibly attracted, during his morning's excursion, the notice of Montchensey, who now observed, that he was happy to see the new buildings constructing of materials

which would render them in future less liable to such an accident.

“ It is an improvement of most essential consequence to our peace and security,” remarked Mr. Combe, “ for no place has suffered more from the depredations of fire than Stratford. Not more than twenty years ago, twice, on the same day twelvemonth, was it nearly destroyed from the like cause, two hundred dwelling-houses having been consumed on those two days ; and yet were they immediately rebuilt of the same perishable materials, and thatched. Awful, however, as was the rage of the devouring element on these memorable days, and much as I was alarmed, being then but a boy of ten years of age, yet was the impression on my mind less fearful and vivid than what, owing to accompanying circumstances, occurred from the conflagration of last July ; for my uncle was at that time dying, and such was the fury of the flames, in consequence of the wind setting in full upon the town, that there was long reason to apprehend not a single house would have escaped. My friend Shakspeare, who happened to be with me on a visit of enquiry after my

uncle when the fire first broke out, instantly rushed forth, not only to protect his own family, but, having seen them safe, to assist in protecting others, and was, I may venture to say, instrumental, even at the risk of his own life, in rescuing much valuable property, and in preserving likewise, by his counsel and directions, many houses which would otherwise have fallen a sacrifice to the flames."

It was at this moment, and whilst Shakspeare was expressing the satisfaction he felt from the idea of having been useful to his fellow townsmen on such an occasion, that Dr. Hall, who sate next to Montchensey, took the opportunity of whispering in his ear, that he was apprehensive the exertions which his father-in-law had been induced to make during this dreadful fire, might prove seriously injurious to his health; for though he generally looked well, and thought himself, indeed, free from any dangerous complaint, yet, ever since that disastrous day, he had been subject to transient, but, in his opinion, alarming affections of his breath, especially upon walking more rapidly than usual, or ascending any rising ground. "I confess," he

continued, "I am greatly puzzled about the nature of this disorder, which has never occurred to me before with precisely the same symptoms; but as the attacks, which are not frequent, have hitherto gone off simply and quickly from rest, and seem to leave no traces of derangement behind, I have not thought it prudent to excite any inquietude in his family upon the subject."* The statement, however, occasioned considerable uneasiness in the breast of Montchensy, who justly deemed the life of Shakspeare peculiarly dear, not only to every individual who knew him, but to the public at large; and he immediately enquired of the Doctor, if he did not think change of air might be of service; for I am in great hopes," he added, "of inducing your father-in-law to visit me this summer in Derbyshire." Here this bye conversation was broken in upon by Sir Thos. Stafford's asking Dr. Hall, who, he understood from Mr. Combe, had attended his uncle to the last, if

* It is highly probable, I think, from the consideration that the bust of Shakspeare on his Stratford monument, and which is said to have been taken from a cast after death, exhibits no signs of emaciation, that the poet died suddenly, or, at least after a very short illness.

he thought the dying moments of his patient had been disturbed by any consciousness of the alarm which surrounded him.

“I believe not,” replied he, “for he had been long sinking from the mere pressure of years; his mental faculties were nearly gone, and he expired the day following, July the 10th, without a struggle, and in the eightieth year of his age.”

“I am happy to learn,” remarked Lord Carew, who was now only a rare and transient visitor at Clopton-House, his chief residence being in London, “that your uncle, Mr. Combe, disposed of his large property in a manner so satisfactory to his relations, while, at the same time, he so liberally and judiciously remembered the poor.”

“His charities, my lord, were not I do assure you,” replied Mr. Combe, “confined to his Will; for though my uncle has been exposed to a good deal of bitter sarcasm on account of his supposed over fondness for the accumulation of money, I can venture to affirm, on my own knowledge, that he was during his life-time peculiarly attentive to the distresses of his poor

neighbours, and ever ready to relieve their wants."

"On a subject like this," cried Shakspeare, with great earnestness of manner, "I feel peculiarly called upon to afford *my* testimony; for it has been circulated, I find, with an industry as officious as it is malevolent, that a certain severe epitaph on my deceased friend, with which we are all probably acquainted, originated with myself. I will not deny but that, in the gaiety of my heart, I have occasionally rallied him on the great care which he directed towards the increase of his wealth; but I knew, at the same time, the worth and the charity of his heart, and must, therefore, disclaim any participation in the fabric of a satire which could only have originated with one who knew Mr. Combe but by vulgar report. Indeed I have some reason to think, that the lines in question are from the pen of young Braithwayte, who last year printed a little work called *The Poet's Willow, or the Passionate Shepherd.*"

"Nothing more likely," observed Mr. Thomas Combe, "for I knew Dick Braithwayte when he was a commoner of Oriel College, Ox-

ford. It is now about eight years ago; he was then nineteen, and, therefore, nearly of my own age; and I can well remember having held several conversations with him on Stratford and its inhabitants, and particularly as describing my uncle to him as prodigiously wealthy, and, at that time, in my own opinion, not a little parsimonious.*

“My dear friend,” exclaimed the elder Mr. Combe, as soon as his brother had done speaking, and shaking the poet, at the same time, most cordially by the hand, “were it not that we have some here not quite so thoroughly acquainted with the benevolence of your disposition as myself, such a disclaimer had been altogether needless; but you well know, from

* Richard Braithwayte was born at Warcop, near Appleby, in Westmoreland, in 1588, and at the age of sixteen became a commoner of Oriel-college, Oxford, being matriculated as a gentleman's son, and a native of Westmoreland. In his “Remains, &c.” published in 1618, occurs the epitaph in question, “of which,” says Mr. Boswell, after weighing all the circumstances connected with its attribution to Shakspeare, “I have very little doubt that Braithwayte was the author.”—MALONE'S *Shakspeare*, vol. ii. p. 500.

Braithwayte died at Appleton, near Richmond in Yorkshire, May 4th, 1673. His “Poet's Willow,” was published in 1614.

long and home-felt experience, that wit is often involuntarily compelled to father what it has not written; and I cannot but remind you," he added laughing, "as one reason, perhaps, for the attribution of which you complain, that there was a time, though now long since passed, when the sharpness of your poetical retort on a former neighbour of ours, occasioned some little stir in this place, though it happily led, in conjunction with the youthful frolic from which it took its origin, to that line of life which has placed you, at length, on the very summit of dramatic reputation."

"It is on this very account, Mr. Combe," cried Helen Montchensey, "that I and my father so much wish to see the scene of this juvenile exploit, and my kind host here," smiling upon Shakspeare as she spoke, with the most bewitching archness, "has been good enough to promise that he will to-morrow morning gratify our desire, and conduct us to the spot himself."

"I am certain," returned Mr. Combe, "that the worthy family at Charlcote will receive you, were it only for your conductor's sake, with the

utmost hospitality; for Sir Thomas has never suffered the prejudices of his father to enter his breast; and with him, indeed, all recollection of the juvenile deer-stalker is lost in the regard which he feels for the poet and the man."

"I thank you, my good neighbour," exclaimed the modest bard, "for your partial opinion; but it behoves me to place the matter in its more probable light, and to say, that Sir Thomas Lucy is too wise a man to visit the sins of the stripling on the head of unoffending age." Then turning to Mr. Thomas Combe, for whom he entertained a more than common regard; "What say you, my young friend," he continued, "this is an idle time with you, for to-morrow is our Midsummer's vigil; will you join us in this pilgrimage to Charlote?"

"With all the pleasure in life," replied Mr. Combe, with extraordinary animation, while Lord Carew and Sir Thomas Stafford declared, that, were they not obliged to leave Clopton the next morning, they should have petitioned for leave to increase the party. "And may not I be allowed, my dear father," said Mrs. Hall, who hitherto had had no opportunity of becom-

ing acquainted with the intended excursion, "may not I be allowed to form one of your number? for though familiar with the scenes you are about to visit, I should much enjoy retracing them in the company of Helen Montchensey."

"Certainly, Susanna, if the Doctor sees no objection, we shall be most happy to have you amongst us."

The conversation now took a more general turn, and, after being supported for some time with much sprightliness and good humour, the party adjourned to the cool and shady retreats of the college gardens, where the evening coming on remarkably balmy and serene, they enjoyed to a late hour, encanopied, as it were, amid flowers of every hue, the fragrant freshness of the summer breeze.

(To be continued.)

No. IV.

The groves of Eden, vanish'd now so long,
Live in description, and grow green in song.

POPE.

OF that highly beautiful and exquisitely finished poem, *Les Jardins, par M. L'Abbé De Lille*, we possess two translations, one well known from the pen of Mrs. Montolieu, and the other published anonymously in the year 1789.

It is to this version of 1789, now fallen into neglect, and become extremely scarce, that I wish to recall the attention of the lovers of poetry and of the original work, not as being executed throughout with undeviating skill, but as possessing parts of uncommon excellence; such, indeed, as not only do justice to the original, but, from the more poetical structure of our language and versification, seem to rise above it in richness and in tone. One great cause, however, of this apparent superiority has arisen from the free and very happy manner in which the translator has often introduced the

colouring, and even the very diction of our noblest bards, where the subjects happened to be of a kind that would admit of such an adoption with judgment and effect. M. De Lille was, to the credit of his taste, a great admirer of English poetry, and has copied in his gardens, though, perhaps, without sufficient acknowledgment, many of the finest passages of Pope and Thomson, Goldsmith and Gray, passages which, though moulded and naturalised, as it were, by a great and congenial spirit, and the first perhaps of Gallic bards, lose, from the very genius of the language to which they are transferred, and more especially to an English ear, no small portion of their pristine raciness and charm. It is evident, then, that the mere re-clothing of these, as far as it was possible, in the garb and spirit of their primary appearance as to style and manner, would give a great additional interest, in the estimation of a British public, to a poem in so many respects calculated to win upon and fix their regard; and, I may add, that it is a task which, notwithstanding the delicacy and difficulty accompanying it, the translator professes, in many instances, to have chalked

out for himself, and in which it is but justice to declare that he has in general succeeded.

What then, it may be asked, has occasioned a version with so many apparent claims to patronage and admiration, to sink into neglect and utter forgetfulness? Two causes may be assigned in reply; the first arising from a source already alluded to, the great inequality of the translation; for though the more poetical parts of the original are transferred with all the energy and beauty just described, there are many and large portions which are tamely and inadequately rendered; a fault for which there is no exemplar in the French poem, as it is one of the prominent merits of De Lille to have betrayed no feebleness or relaxation throughout his design, but to have touched and retouched every part until the whole came from his forming hand a model of simplicity and taste.

The second cause for the neglect which the version before us has experienced, may doubtless be attributed to the circumstance of its having been undertaken within a very few years after the first publication of the original in the year 1782; when, consequently, as no second edi-

tion of our translator's labours has appeared, it must want the many episodes and descriptions, (the latter principally taken from English scenery,) which have been introduced into numerous subsequent impressions of the French work. It was not, indeed, until after several editions of "Les Jardins" had passed through the press, that De Lille ventured to introduce, as he had long wished and promised to do, a description of the gardens of England, and in the impression including these sketches, he thus notices the attempt, beautifully alluding as he does it, to the memory and the rural retreat of the bard of Twickenham: "Cette nouvelle édition a été retardée par des obstacles imprévus dont le détail est inutile. La faiblesse de mes yeux et de mes moyens m'ayant empêché de visiter, comme je me l'étois promis, les plus beaux jardins d'Angleterre, je n'en ai cité qu'un petit nombre, célèbres par leur beauté ou par les souvenirs qu'ils rappellent. Tels sont Blenheim, Stow, et le jardin de Pope, si heureux d'appartenir à un homme plein de goût, qui, en conservant religieusement la demeure et les jardins de ce grand poète, rend à sa mémoire l'hommage à la fois le

plus simple et le plus honorable. Les premiers monumens d'un écrivain fameux sont sa maison qu'il a bâtie, les jardins qu'il a plantés, la bibliothèque qu'il a formée. C'est là, si l'on croyoit encore aux ombres, qu'il faudroit chercher la sienne."*

It is necessary, in this place, however, to mention, that as all the features which constitute the leading excellencies of the work, and which have secured for it a justly merited popularity, are to be found in the early impressions, the subsequent matter, with but one or two exceptions, adding rather to the bulk than the intrinsic value of the poem, the version of 1789 may be considered, as far as it has succeeded in its attempt, as not being deficient in any part which has truly served to build up the fame of the original author. I say, as far as it has succeeded, not only with reference to the more brilliant passages, but under a conviction that its chief and perhaps only fault, springs from

* *Les Jardins ; ou L'Art D'Embellir Les Paysages. Poème. Par M. L'Abbé De Lille. Nouvelle Edition, Revue, Corrigée, et Augmentée. A Londres : Chez B. Dulau et Co. Soho Square. 1811. Preface p. ix.*

that want of sustained finish already adverted to as one of the characteristics of the French poem; an inequality, however, which has rendered it peculiarly fitted for the process it is about to undergo in this paper, that of separating its gems from the mass of inferior matter in which they are imbedded.

On the merits of the original work of De Lille, which has been naturalised in almost every European language, it would be superfluous, in the present day, to enter into any critical disquisition; but it may be remarked, that "Les Jardins," form a poem which both in manner and matter is built upon a literature and taste almost exclusively extrinsic to the country of its birth; and that whilst its author, with a singular freedom from national prejudice, adopted as his best and purest models the first poets of Britain, he has furnished at the same time, not only the most striking and successful instance of an almost complete emancipation from the pompous frigidity and declamatory affectation, which have so generally debased the poetry of his countrymen, but he has shown also, and in a way so fascinating as to have disarmed all envy

and struck dumb the malevolence of criticism, of what unaffected tenderness and comparative simplicity, of what stores of natural painting and unsophisticated feeling, it might easily and efficiently be rendered the vehicle. Indeed no man appears to have come to the task with talents more fitted to ensure success, or with a higher estimate of what should be achieved, in this department of the art, than De Lille. In his preface, when speaking of the two kinds of interest of which poetry is susceptible, that of the subject and that of the composition, he justly observes, that as the didactic branch, is incapable of exhibiting either the intricacies of fable or the excitement of the stronger passions, it must rest its attractions in a great measure, if not altogether, on this latter species of interest. "Il faut donc suppléer cet intérêt," he proceeds, "par les détails les plus soignés, et par les agrémens du style le plus brillant et le plus pur. C'est là qu'il faut que la justesse des idées, la vivacité du coloris, l'abondance des images, le charme de la variété, l'adresse des contrastes, une harmonie enchanteresse, une élégance soutenue, attachent et réveillent continuellement

le lecteur. Mais ce mérite demande l'organisation la plus heureuse, le goût le plus exquis, le travail le plus opiniâtre. Aussi les chefs-d'œuvres en ce genre sont ils rares. L'Europe compte deux cents bonnes tragedies: les Géorgiques et le poëme de Lucrèce, chez les anciens, sont les seuls monumens du second genre; et tandis que les tragédies d'Ennius, de Pacuvius, la Médée même d'Ovide, ont péri, l'antiquité nous a transmis ces deux poëmes, et il semble que le génie de Rome, ait encore veillé sur sa gloire en nous conservant ces chefs-d'œuvres. Parmi les modernes nous ne connoissons guère que les deux poëmes des Saisons, Anglois et François, l'Art Poétique de Boileau, et l'admirable Essai sur l'Homme de Pope, qui aient obtenu et conservé une place distinguée parmi les ouvrages de ce genre de poésie." *

It is to be regretted that when this preface was written, the Abbé should have forgotten to enumerate among the distinguished didactic poems of the moderns, the "English Garden" of his contemporary *Mason*; which had been now completed, and in extensive circulation for nearly

* *Les Jardins*. Preface, pp. xi. xii.

twenty years. He has, indeed, in the opening of the additional matter which he has given us to the advertisement prefixed to the early editions of his work, adverted to this beautiful poem ; for, it appears, that he had been charged, especially in this country, with having been too largely indebted to it. “ Quelques littérateurs Anglois,” he says, “ ont cru que j’avois pris l’idée, et plusieurs détails de ce poëme dans celui qu’a composé sur la meme sujet, Mr. Mason, digne ami de Mr. Gray. C’est avec plaisir que je rends justice à quantité de beaux vers qui distinguent cet ouvrage ; mais je déclare que longtemps avant d’avoir lu le poëme de Mr. Mason j’avois composé le mien, et l’avois recité dans plusieurs séances publiques de l’Académie Françoise et du Collége Royal, auxquels j’avois l’honneur d’appartenir.”*

It is somewhat remarkable that the only two poems of any considerable value to which so kindred a subject as the art of embellishing grounds has given birth, should have come before the public nearly at the same time ; for though the first book of the “ English Garden”

* Preface, p. viii.

was published in 1772, the fourth and last did not appear until 1782, the very year when the first impression of "Les Jardins," issued from the Parisian press; and it is probable, therefore, from what the Abbé has said in the passage just quoted, that if the conception of the English poem, and a part of its execution, were anterior to that of the French work, the larger portion of both must have been written during the same period; a parallelism which must, of course, as far as it obtained, preclude all idea of imitation, though from the identity of design which occupied the minds of the two poets, its appearance could scarcely be avoided.

But returning to the more immediate subject of my paper, the Anonymous Translation of 1789, I think it right to observe that, in conducting a suite of extracts from its pages, it will be my plan, after commenting slightly on the merits of the version, to endeavour to introduce what may, in some measure, serve, through the medium of comparison, remark, or historical disquisition, to illustrate the subject or sentiment of the original.

In a short, but elegantly written, prefatory ad-

dress to his readers, the translator indulges in a slight but pleasing retrospect of what taste and genius had contributed toward the praise and the improvement of his favourite art, observing that the amateur in landscape "will admire, but without regret, the few faint touches etched by HOMER, and by VIRGIL: he will view and pass the luxurious, but fantastic recess of PLINY, to approve, to feel, to envy, the better taste of TULLY in the shades of the more natural Tusculum: he will warm and enrich his imagination with the brilliant enchantments of TASSO and ARIOSTO, with the fond fancies of CHAUCER and SPENSER, with the Paradise of MILTON: he will correct his judgment with the critical lessons of BACON, of TEMPLE, and of POPE, with the various designs of WATELET and MOREL, with the chaste touches of MASON, and the judicious illustrations of BURGH. Thus, with a mind taught to admire, and willing to imitate the fair forms of genuine nature, he will ever follow obedient to the 'Genius of the Place,' and, as situation may suggest, either walk with the cautious KENT, or tread the fairy footsteps of BROWN."

In this birds-eye view of the progress of his art, the translator has omitted two writers whose influence on the improvement of landscape gardening had been of the most marked and decided kind, namely, **WHATELY** and **GIRARDIN**. The former in his "*Observations on Modern Gardening,*" published in 1770, had exhibited, together with a taste singularly pure and correct, *the most exquisite talents for delineating* (for the embellishment of rural scenery,) its varied features and effect; whilst the latter, in his essay "*De la Composition des Paysages, ou des Moyens d'embellir la Nature autour des Habitations, en joignant l'agréable à l'utile, &c.*" first printed in 1777, and translated by Mr. Malthus, with an admirable introduction in 1783, and which so beautifully describes his own romantic creation at Ermenonville, had proved how effectively he could transfer to unimproved nature the finest conceptions of the great masters of painting, and with what eloquence he could describe their result.

It may be remarked, that at the time when the paragraph we are commenting upon was written, *Brown* was in the zenith of his reputa-

tion, and had, but a very few years before, received from the pen of Mason an eulogy which the lapse of half a century has shown to have been written more in the spirit of poetry than of prophecy. We meet with it at the close of his interesting review of the progress of gardening in England, where, after mentioning Shenstone,

Who knew, perchance, to harmonize his shades
Still softer than his song,

he adds,

Him too, the living leader of thy powers,
Great Nature ! him the Muse shall hail in notes
Which antedate the praise true Genius claims
From just posterity : bards yet unborn
Shall pay to BROWN that tribute, fittest paid
In strains, the beauty of his scenes inspire.

Brown, who had been brought up a kitchen gardener near Woodstock, and had been afterwards head-gardener at Stowe until the year 1750, was, without doubt a man of considerable talents, as his Blenheim has amply proved ; but he was deficient in a knowledge of picturesque

beauty; and the result was, that he became too much of a mannerist, and when his system of belting and clumping had fallen into the hands of a herd of imitators, nothing could be more monotonous and insipid than the scenery which was daily creating from one end of the kingdom to the other; the two great agents, wood and water, which should naturally have produced a never-ceasing variety, being now seen only under prescribed forms, the former presenting but the belt, the clump, or the single tree, and the latter assuming, however different might be the situation, one uniform shape and character.

Such a system, it is evident, could not last long; for though it was upheld for a time by the ingenuity and resources of Humphrey Repton, who used to term Brown "his great self-taught predecessor," it fell, about the year 1794, before the attack of Payne Knight, and Uvedale Price, the former in his "Landscape, a Poem," and the latter in his "Essays on the Picturesque," endeavouring to establish the art of landscape gardening on the principles of painting, "not," as Price justly observed, "to the exclusion of nature, but as an assistant in the study of her works."

Nothing, certainly, could be better adapted to introduce the variety and the freedom which were now so much wanted in the art, than the plan thus recommended, provided it were adopted with a due attention to congruity and utility ; and its influence, in fact, on the public mind soon became such, as, though opposed at first by nearly all the disciples of Brown, and especially by Repton, who entered into a public controversy with Price on the subject, it speedily effected a very desirable change in the aspect of our decorated scenery, and even finally brought over its warmest opponents ; the latter works of Repton, who continued to publish until 1817, partaking much more of what might entitle him to be considered a disciple of Price than of his former venerated master.

The study, however, of the finest artists in landscape painting, of Rosa, Ruysdale, Poussin, and Claude, with a view to the transference of their beauties to living scenery, must, unless under the guidance of a correct judgment, and great good sense, often produce a display of wild, fantastic, and discordant parts, tenfold more disgusting than even the monotonous out-

lines of Brown ; and such, indeed, has not unfrequently been the case ; for, where it has been forgotten that grounds should be laid out not exclusively with a view to pictorial effect, but with a direct reference in many of their features to the personal use, and comfort, and enjoyment of the proprietor, what but affectation and inaccordancy must ensue ? In fact, it should be ever held in mind, that the grounds immediately adjoining the mansion should, in a greater or less degree, partake of the style and character of its age and architecture. If the house be an old one, or built to assume the appearance of antiquity, assuredly a correct taste would preserve, or create, around it a style of gardening correspondent with its time-worn aspect ; and the avenue, the alley, the terrace, and parterre, would here find their proper place ; whilst, if the character of the country should admit of it, the more distant parts of the domain, where nature is expected to be perfectly free from control, might exhibit all that a picturesque imagination could conceive and execute ;

All that *Lorraine* light touch'd with soft'ning hue,
Or savage *Rosa* dash'd, or learned *Poussin* drew.

If, on the contrary, the mansion be in the modern style of architecture, still the home-grounds, whilst they partake of the more free, cheerful, and disengaged character of the building, should exhibit, though without any offensive intrusion of art, evident traces of their adaptation to the pleasures and comforts of domestic life. Harmony, therefore, and softness, and a certain degree of regular beauty, though not unmingled with the charms of a varying outline, should be studied here, and not picturesque effect; this, as in the former instance, being reserved for scenery less immediately connected with the business and the pursuits of man. It is this want of attention to propriety, to the beauty resulting from adaptation, utility, and a due subserviency to the purposes of habitation, which has rendered so many attempts towards creating picturesque effect not only extravagant, but ridiculous; and which occasioned Dugald Stewart, several years ago, to observe, in relation to the new system of Messrs. Knight and Price: "As to the application of the knowledge acquired from the study of paintings, to the improvement of natural landscape, I have

no doubt, that to a superior understanding and taste, like those of Price, it may often suggest very useful hints; but if recognised as the standard to which the ultimate appeal is to be made, it would infallibly cover the face of the country with a new and systematical species of affectation, not less remote than that of Brown, from the style of gardening which he wishes to recommend;" and he then adds, in a vein of good sense which should never be forgotten, "Let painting be allowed its due praise in quickening our attention to the beauties of nature; in multiplying our resources for their farther embellishment; and in holding up a standard, from age to age, to correct the caprices of fashionable innovations; but let our taste for these beauties be chiefly formed on the study of nature herself; nor let us ever forget so far what is due to her indisputable and salutary prerogative, as to attempt an encroachment upon it by laws, which derive the whole of their validity from her own sanction."

Fortunately a taste for the study of nature, as she is to be seen in this country, under all her most pleasing and picturesque forms, had

been established in the public mind just anterior to the introduction of the system of Price, and principally through the efforts of Gilpin, whose numerous picturesque tours had not only rendered every well-educated man familiar with the principles of landscape-painting, but had induced all who possessed the means and the opportunity, to visit the scenes which he had so admirably described, and to study nature for themselves at the fountain head ; a fashion, which whilst it precluded the probability of any extensive return to the formal, insipid, and indiscriminate arrangements of the followers of Brown, men totally devoid of the inventive talents of their master, secured, at the same time, such a sincere and just admiration of the great archetype of all beauty and sublimity, as to prevent any very frequent or injurious submission to the caprices of art and the dictates of mannerism : painting being only so far adopted as a guide, as she has shown, through the medium of her best artists, the rare attainment of *selecting, grouping* and *combining* happily, from the varied stores around her. It is exclusively to this mode of deriving assistance from the sister art,

that our two didactic poets on landscape gardening most emphatically point ; at the same time ever holding up to view the grand truth, that the rules which they, after the example of the great masters of the pencil have found it requisite to adopt, have been primarily dictated, and occasionally carried into execution, by Nature herself. Thus De Lille in reference to this very characteristic of genius in the schools of painting, tells his aspirant to fame in the art of embellishing living scenery,

Ainsi savoient choisir les Berghems, les Poussins.
 Voyez, étudiez leurs chefs-d'œuvres divins :
 Et ce qu' à la campagne emprunta la peinture,
 Que l'art reconnoissant le rende à la nature.

Chant i.

and Mason still more minutely and explicitly :

If yet thy art be dubious how to treat
 Nature's neglected features, turn thy eye
 To those, the masters of correct design,
 Who, from her vast variety, have cull'd
 The loveliest, boldest parts, and new arranged ;
 Yet, as herself approv'd, herself inspired.
 In their immortal works thou ne'er shalt find

Dull uniformity, contrivance quaint,
Or labour'd littleness ; but contrasts broad,
And careless lines, whose undulating forms
Play thro' the varied canvass : these transplant
Again on Nature ; take thy plastic spade,
It is thy pencil ; take thy seeds, thy plants,
They are thy colours ; and by these repay
With interest every charm she lent thy art.

Book i. l. 264.

In thus reviewing the two systems of embellishing grounds which have prevailed in this country, and to which we have been led by the remarks of the anonymous translator of De Lille, it is by no means our wish to deny, that the eulogistic notice of Brown with which these remarks conclude, or the still more laudatory tribute of the poet of the English Garden, was not, in many instances, justly merited. He whom Whately and Mason admired, could not be an ordinary man, and, in fact, Brown possessed much of the "fairy" fancy of the genuine bard ; but notwithstanding all his devotion to, and enthusiasm for, nature, he ultimately became too fond of dictating to her in an arbitrary manner, and of tricking her out in a style too uni-

formly limited and refined ; nor could the gentlemen we have just mentioned have formed any idea of the enormous extent to which, through the medium of insulated clumping, and circular belting, these defects were to be exaggerated and carried by a swarm of tasteless disciples ; for it is evident from the writings of both, and especially from the extract just given from Mason, that in their contemplation the only legitimate mode of improving nature was to be derived from sources which forbade all littleness, circumscription, and obtrusive uniformity. It has been thought necessary to add thus much in relation to this once fashionable director of landscape gardening, as he has continued to be, even to the present day, a subject for indiscriminate censure, or too lavish praise.

After these preliminary, though somewhat copious, and, perhaps, rather digressional, observations on the progress and manner of embellishing grounds in England, but which the very nature of the subject almost forced upon us, let us again turn a more undivided attention towards the earliest effort which was made to naturalise in this country the noblest production

on the art of which the continent can boast. Much and deservedly as the English Garden of Mason has been praised for the justness of its precepts, and the beauty of its execution, for the purity of its taste, and the general simplicity of its style, the extracts we are about to give from the forgotten version of the French bard, if they do but bear out the character we have ventured to assign them, will sufficiently prove to the English reader, that in these respects the sister poem of De Lille is little, if at all, inferior, whilst in variety and richness of illustration, it is certainly more abundant.

These encomia, however, let it be recollected, can only apply, as far as the version is concerned, to the *selections* which we shall make from its pages, and that, as a *whole*, the translation has no pretensions to the praise which is due to the singular beauty and spirit with which some of its parts have been finished.

In the ensuing number, therefore, after a few brief remarks on the subject matter of the first book of "Les Jardins," we shall commence our series of quotations, taking care in every instance,

and in the first place, to cite the original, that those who are acquainted with the French language, may have an opportunity of judging not only of the merits of the extracts as English poetry, but of their fidelity as translations.

No. V.

Here strive for empire, o'er the happy scene,
The nymphs of fountain, sea, and woodland green ;
The power of grace and beauty holds the prize
Suspended even to her votaries,
And finds amazed, where'er she casts her eye,
Their contest forms the matchless harmony.

PAULUS SILENTARIUS, *apud Bland.*

THE first book of the Gardens of De Lille is principally occupied in teaching how to borrow and combine with the happiest skill and effect, the richest materials of picturesque beauty ; how best, in fact, to convert the scene to be embellished into a perfect and appropriate and harmonious whole ; by consulting beyond all things the genius of the place, and so adapting the operations of art to the peculiarities of the site, as to hide its defects, and call forth all its advantages ; a subject which naturally leads to a consideration of the different species of landscapes and of gardens.

After a few preliminary lines, in which the

author commemorates the return of Spring, and speaks with well-founded rapture of the happy subject he had chosen, he thus proceeds to invoke the assistance of the Didactic Muse.

Toi donc, qui, mariant la grâce à la vigueur,
Sais du chant didactique animer la langueur,
O Muse ! si jadis, dans les vers de Lucrèce,
Des austères leçons tu polis la rudesse ;
Si par toi, sans flétrir, le langage des dieux,
Son rival a chanté le soc laborieux ;
Viens orner un sujet plus riche, plus fertile,
Dont le charme autrefois avoit tenté Virgile.
N'empruntons point ici d'ornement étranger ;
Viens, de mes propres fleurs mon front va s'ombrager ;

Et, comme un rayon par colore un beau nuage,
Des couleurs du sujet je tiendrai mon langage.

L'art innocent et doux que célèbrent mes vers,
Remonte aux premiers jours de l'antique univers.
Dès que l'homme eut soumis les champs à la culture,
D'un heureux coin de terre il soigna la parure ;
Et plus près de ses yeux il rangea sous ses loix
Des arbres favoris et des fleurs de son choix.
Des simple Alcinoüs le luxe encore rustique
Décoroit un verger. D'un art plus magnifique
Babylone éleva des jardins dans les airs.

Chant i.

Beautiful as these lines certainly are, the following version of them, especially that part of it which is distinguished by *italics*, must, if I am not greatly mistaken, be pronounced equal in point of melody, and superior in point of poetic expression.

Come then, O Muse! that oft in union sweet,
 Bid'st gentle grace and warmest vigour meet,
 To animate the lesson's languid lore;
 If e'er Lucretius bless'd thy aid of yore,
 If, fir'd by thee, in high celestial lays,
 His rival sung the ploughshare's useful praise:
 A richer subject now invites thy voice,
 A theme once bless'd by Virgil's happy choice.
 Here let no foreign ornament be found,
 With my own garland let my brow be crown'd.
Lo! where the lustre-beaming star of day
Gilds yonder evening cloud with purest ray;
So shall my verse reflect a brighter gleam,
Tinged with the colours of my lovely theme.
The gentle art, that now adorns my lays,
Was dear to infant Nature's golden days.
When lab'ring man first tam'd the stubborn soil,
One little happy corner bless'd his toil.
Where by his hands arranged, in order grew
His chosen trees, his fav'rite flow'rets blew.

Hence in Alcinoüs' blooming orchard shone
The simple lux'ry of a rustic throne ;
Hence with stupendous art, upraised on high,
Thy gardens, Babylon, assail'd the sky.

A garden, which Bacon has justly termed the purest of all human pleasures, appears to have been also the most ancient. The garden of Alcinoüs is certainly, as De Lille has remarked, in a note to his introductory lines, a precious monument of the antiquity and history of gardens, and clearly one of the earliest productions of infant art; but we possess one yet anterior, and, if tradition be correct in pointing out its site, one that, from its very situation, must have included much of picturesque as well as of regular beauty. I allude to the garden of King Solomon, slightly mentioned in Ecclesiastes, and delineated more at length, through the medium of comparison, in the Song of Songs, of which latter description the following is an admirable version by my friend Dr. Good :

My bride! my love! in thee perfection meets ;
A garden art thou, fill'd with matchless sweets :
A garden wall'd, those matchless sweets to shield ;
A spring inclosed, a fountain fresh and seal'd ;

A paradise of plants — where all unite,
Dear to the smell, the palate, or the sight ;
Of rich pomegranates, that at random blow ;
Cypress and nard, in fragrant gales that flow ;
Nard, saffron, cinnamon, the dulcet airs,
Deep through its canes, the calamus prepares ;
The scented aloes, and each shrub that showers
Gums from its veins, and spices from its flowers ;—
O pride of gardens ! fount of endless sweets !
Well-spring of all in Lebanon that meets ! —
Awake, O North-wind ! come, thou Southern breeze !
Blow on my garden, and refresh its trees.*

Of the supposed site of this lovely Oriental garden, Maundrell, towards the close of the seventeenth century (1696), has given us, in his account of Bethlehem and its vicinity, a very curious and interesting detail. "The first place that we directed our course to," he says, "was those famous fountains, pools, and gardens, which were the contrivance and delight of King Solomon, alluded to Eccles. ii. 5, 6. About the distance of an hundred and forty paces from

* Song of Songs: or Sacred Idyls. Translated from the original Hebrew, with Notes, critical and explanatory. By John Mason Good. 1803. pp. 28, 29.

these pools is the FOUNTAIN from which they principally derive their waters. This the friars told us was the SEALED FOUNTAIN, to which the *Holy Spouse* is compared, Cant. iv. 19. ; and they pretend a tradition that King Solomon SHUT UP THESE SPRINGS, and kept the door of them SEALED with his SIGNET, to preserve the waters for his own drinking in their natural freshness and purity. Nor was it difficult thus to secure them, they rising under ground, and having no avenue to them but a little hole, like the mouth of a narrow well. These waters wind along through two rooms cut out of the solid rock, which are arched over with stone arches, very ancient, perhaps the work of Solomon himself. Below, the pool runs down a *narrow rocky valley, inclosed on both sides with high mountains* ; this, they told us, was the INCLOSED GARDEN alluded to in the same song.*

Thus situated, it was scarcely possible to be otherwise than pleasing and romantic ; but a still more striking illustration of its character and beauties, may be drawn from the consider-

* Good's *Song of Songs*, p. 124.

ation that it was intended by Solomon as a direct imitation of what he had seen within the recesses of Lebanon,

Well-spring of all in Lebanon that meets t

and the commentators almost invariably point to the following passage in Maundrell as painting the very scene which the monarch was anxious to emulate. "There is," says the traveller, "a very deep rupture in the side of Libanus, running at least seven hours travel directly up into the mountain. It is on both sides exceedingly steep and high, clothed with fragrant greens from top to bottom, and every where refreshed with fountains falling down from the rocks in pleasant cascades—the ingenious work of nature. The streams all uniting at the bottom, make a full and rapid torrent, whose agreeable murmuring is heard all over the place, and adds no small pleasure to it."* This is, in fact, a scene which contains within its own bosom nearly all the constituents of picturesque beauty, and in serving as a model to the Jewish sove-

* Good's Song of Songs, p. 127.

reign, could scarcely fail to infuse, however mingled with the features of art, much of its peculiar wild character and charm.

In general, however, gardening among the ancients, especially amongst the Greeks and Romans, was limited as in the gardens of Alcinoüs and Laertes in Homer, to the production of herbs, and fruits, and flowers; and if among the opulent, effect were aimed at, it was that resulting from undisguised art, from geometric order and architectural symmetry. Not that the inhabitants of Greece and Italy were in the slightest degree deficient in a just taste for the beauties of natural scenery, as their best writers have sufficiently proved; but as, in fact, the country around them was a perfect landscape in nature's most alluring dress, such indeed as our parks and pleasure-grounds can but faintly rival, novelty and contrast were sought after almost necessarily, by the introduction of artificial, and correctly regular forms, so that in the most flourishing period of the Roman empire, the gardens or pleasure grounds of the consul Pliny, exhibited not only terraces, parterres, and water-works, but even trees sheared and

dressed into a multitude of whimsical and grotesque forms, bearing a strong resemblance to what, in this country was the fashionable style of gardening in the reign of William and Mary.

It would appear, indeed, that in proportion as the gardens of the ancients became more ornamented and magnificent, in the like proportion they deviated from nature ; and that it was only in the very circumscribed grounds of the man of small property, where economy and simplicity were to be studied, that she was left in any degree free and unshackled. Such a retreat had been the dearest wish of Horace,

Hortus ubi, et tecto vicinus jugis aquæ fons,
Et paulum silvæ super his foret ;

and such was the garden of the old Corycian planter, so exquisitely described by Virgil, a picture not to be contemplated without the utmost complacency and delight, and from which, contrary to the avowal of the anonymous translator of De Lille, it is, I think, scarcely possible to part, without deeply regretting, that the bard had not made gardening the express subject of a separate poem, notwithstanding it is probable

that the celebration of this, his favourite theme, might, as far as strictly related to the art itself, have been confined to the production of fruits and flowers; yet with what never-to-be-forgotten episodes would not the genius of Virgil have diversified such a subject. As it is, the transient sketch which he has given us, is, beyond all comparison, the most pleasing and interesting delineation of a garden to be found in the whole compass of ancient poetry, and as such, and as alluded to in the extract from *De Lille*, I shall be pardoned, I trust, introducing it here in by far the best version to which, in any nation, the inimitable original has given birth. The poet is naturally led into the subject whilst recommending the breathing sweets of the garden, as the means best calculated to invite the roving bees to settle, and he then adds, in a tone of tender regret, which cannot fail to excite a similar emotion in the minds of his readers, —

Ah fav'rite scenes ! but now with gather'd sail
I seek the shore, nor trust th' inviting gale ;
Else had my song your charms at leisure traced,
And all the garden's varied arts embraced ;

Sung, twice each year, how Pæstan roses blow,
How endive drinks the rill that puris below,
How trailing gourds pursue their mazy way,
Swell as they creep, and widen into day ;
How verdant celery decks its humid bed,
How late blown flow'rets round narcissus spread ;
The lithe acanthus and the ivy hoar,
And myrtle blooming on the sea-beat shore.
Yes, I remember, where Galæsus leads,
His flood dark winding through the golden meads,
Where proud Cæbalia's tow'rs o'erlook the plain,
Once I beheld an old Corycian swain ;
Lord of a little spot, by all disdain'd,
Where never lab'ring yoke subsistence gain'd,
Where never shepherd gave his flock to feed,
Nor Bacchus dared to trust th' ungrateful mead.
He there with scanty herbs the bushes crown'd
And planted lilies, vervain, poppies, round ;
Nor envied kings, when late, at twilight close,
Beneath his peaceful shed he sought repose,
And cull'd from earth, with changeful plenty stored,
Th' unpurchased feasts that piled his varied board,
At spring-tide first he pluck'd the full-blown rose,
From autumn first the ripen'd apple chose ;
And e'en when winter split the rocks with cold,
And chain'd th' o'erhanging torrent as it roll'd,
His blooming hyacinths, ne'er known to fail,

Shed sweets unborrow'd of the vernal gale,
 As 'mid their rifled beds he wound his way,
 Chid the slow sun and zephyr's long delay.
 Hence first his bees new swarms unnumber'd gave,
 And press'd from richest combs the golden wave;
 Limes round his haunts diffused a grateful shade,
 And verdant pines with many a cone array'd;
 And every bud, that gemm'd the vernal spray,
 Swell'd into fruit beneath th' autumnal ray.
 He lofty elms transposed in order placed,
 Luxuriant pears at will his alleys graced,
 And grafted thorns that blushing plums display'd,
 And planes that stretch'd o'er summer feasts their
 shade.

Ah! fav'rite scenes! to other bards resign'd,
 I leave your charms, and trace my task assign'd.

SOTHEBY. *

Returning, however, from this digression to a further exemplification of the merits of our anonymous translator, I have great pleasure in bringing forward an extract which must, I think, with every one who is alive to the charms of poetic language and melody, place the occa-

* *Georgic*. lib. iv.

Atque equidem, extremo ni jam sub fine laborum. v. 116.

ad

Prætereo, atque aliis post me memoraanda relinquo. v. 148.

sional felicity with which this version is executed, in the most striking point of view. The original, after asserting the possibility of calling forth beauties even from the most apparently barren and hopeless site, thus proceeds to show in what manner this magic result is to be effected.

Le sol le plus ingrat connoîtra la beauté.
 Est il nud ? que des bois parent sa nudité :
 Couvert ? portez la hache en ses forêts profondes :
 Humide ? en lacs pompeux, en rivières fécondes
 Changez cette onde impure ; et par d'heureux tra-
 vaux,

Corrigez à la fois l'air, la terre et les eaux :
 Aride enfin ? cherchez, sondez, fouillez encore ;
 L'eau, lente à se trahir, peut-être est près d'éclorre.

Il est des soins plus doux, un art plus enchanteur.
 C'est peu de charmer l'œil, il faut parler au cœur.
 Avez-vous donc connu ces rapports invisibles
 Des corps inanimés et des êtres sensibles ?
 Avez-vous entendu des eaux, des prés, des bois,
 La muette éloquence et la secrète voix ?
 Rendez-nous ces effets. Que du riant au sombre,
 Du noble au gracieux, les passages sans nombre.
 M'intéressent toujours. Simple et grand, fort et
 doux,

Unissez-tous les tons, pour plaire à tous les goûts.

Là; que le peintre vienne enrichir sa palette ;
 Que l'inspiration y trouble le poète
 Que le sage, du calme y goûte les douceurs ;
 L'heureux, ses souvenirs; le malheureux, ses pleurs.
 Chant i.

To render justice to these lines, exhibiting, as they do, a great and almost equal share of sweetness, energy, and grace, must, it is evident, require talents of no common order. How the demand has been answered by our translator it will be a delightful as well as an easy task to show. I think it right, however, to premise, that in the first paragraph of the subsequent version, I have taken the liberty of transposing a single couplet.

The wildest waste with warmest charms may glow ;
 A shady robe o'er naked Nature throw ;
 Where'er immured she lies in gloomy night,
 Quick let the axe admit the beaming light ;
 Where stagnant fens in putrid torpor sleep,
 Let lakes spread wide, or fertile rivers sweep ;
 If dry the site, search, dig, explore the soil,
 Where least you hope the bubbling fount may boil;
 Thus o'er the ground your hands shall plenty show'r,
 And health shall glow where sickness pined before !

Nor charm the eye alone ; with nobler art
Awake the soul, and interest the heart.
Do you the viewless ties of being know,
That link the chain of Nature here below ?
Have you the silent music understood
That breathes around from hill, and vale, and flood ?
That music we require, from grave to gay,
From bold to fair let just transition stray.
Be grand or simple, be sublime or chaste,
Each tone unite, and charm each various taste.
The canvass thence shall drink a richer dye,
The bard there burn with inspiration high,
Till his rapt eyes in finer frenzy roll ;
There shall the sage to peace becalm his soul ;
Remember'd joys the happy heart shall cheer,
And the wretch feel the luxury of a tear.

Of this very highly finished and interesting extract, the concluding couplet of the first paragraph, whilst it gives the general import of the French, is at the same time, both in its imagery and sentiment, a noble and truly poetical expansion of the original ; an eulogium which will apply with perhaps still more force and propriety to the last six lines of the second portion, which need not indeed fear a comparison, as to beauty of expression and harmony

of construction, with the most artfully polished couplets of our best bards. Nor can I leave the passage without briefly noticing the very finely-sustained contrast which subsists between its two parts; the first triplet, as well in diction as in thought, breathing a tone of deep and lofty enthusiasm, whilst the second steals upon the heart with a tender and subduing melody, and touches, at its close, one of pity's sweetest chords.

After these cursory remarks on the merits of the version, it would be unpardonable to pass by the admirable doctrine of the original, which teaches us, that landscape gardening is not, in its highest aim, necessarily limited to the exclusive production of the picturesque, to the mere harmony of forms and colours, lights and shades, but that it may, under the guidance of a feeling and poetic mind, successfully appeal to the heart, calling forth those emotions and associations which, through the medium of cheerfulness or tenderness, grandeur or sublimity, hallow and endear its scenery.

The circumstances and arrangements most conducive to the excitement of these impressions, are then entered into; and the foremost place is

given to the magic influence of *motion*, without which, whatever may be the effect aimed at, all will be monotonous and insipid. The translator has here again most happily succeeded in sustaining the spirit of the Gallic bard, and he imperatively calls upon me, therefore, for the transference of the passage to these pages.

Surtout du mouvement : —

Des grands peintres encor faut-il attester l'art ?
Voyez-les prodiguer, de leur pinceau fertile,
De mobiles objets sur la toile immobile,
L'onde qui fuit, le vent qui courbe les rameaux,
Les globes de fumée, exalés des hameaux,
Les troupeaux, les pasteurs, et leurs jeux et leur
danse ;

Saisissez leur secret, plantez en abondance
Ces souples arbrisseaux, et ces arbres mouvans,
Dont la-tête obéit à l'haleine des vents : —
Là du sommet lointain des voches buissonneuses,
Je vois la chèvre pendre ; ici, de mille agneaux
L'écho porte les cris de coteaux en coteaux,
Dans ces prés abreuvés des eaux de la colline,
Couché sur ses genoux, le bœuf pesant rumine ;
Tandis qu'impétueux, fier, inquiet, ardent,
Cet animal guerrier qu'enfanta le trident,

Déplie, en se jouant, dans un gras pâturage,
 Sa vigueur indomptée et sa grâce sauvage.
 Que j'aime et sa souplesse et son port animé;
 Soit que dans le courant du fleuve accoutumé
 En frissonnant il plonge, et luttant contre l'onde,
 Batte du pied le flot qui blanchit et qui gronde;
 Soit qu'à travers les prés il s'échappe par bonds;
 Soit que, livrant aux vents ses longs crins vagabonds,
 Superbe, l'œil en feu, les narines fumantes,
 Beau d'orgueil et d'amour; il vole à ses amantes;
 Quand je ne le vois plus, mon œil le suit encor.

Chant i.

Be motion first your care : —

Lo! living graces from the pencil flow!
 See the stiff canvass warm with motion glow!
 Swift flies the flood, the waving branches bend,
 And from the cot the wreaths of smoke ascend,
 Wide roam the herds, the shepherds dance and play,
 And all the finish'd piece with life is gay!
 This secret seize, and 'mid each verdant vale,
 Plant shrubs, plant trees, that bow to ev'ry gale, —
 And fling a fluctuating gloom around : —
 There on the distant crag o'erhung with wood,
 The trembling goat may browse his scanty food;
 Or here a thousand lambs with bleating shrill,
 The babbling echoes wake from hill to hill;

Or cumbrous oxen ruminatè, beside
The mountain-streams that thro' the meadows glide.
While proudly restive, in the fertile vale,
The trident's warrior offspring snuffs the gale ;
What savage grace his vig'rous limbs display,
When fierce, impetuous, wild he bounds away !
I love his courage, when, in frantic mood,
He plunges deep amid the flashing flood,
And struggling spurns the torrent's headlong course,
That roars and foams around with thund'ring force.
And when each sinew trembles with desire,
His nostrils smoke, his eye-balls blaze with fire,
When to the wind-loose streams his flowing mane,
And love and pride swell high in ev'ry vein,
And to his joys he flies, my eyes pursue,
Ev'n when his lightning-speed no more I view.

With an equal degree of felicity has our translator transfused another kindred, and immediately subsequent, injunction of his original, which, after dwelling for some time on the infinite and ever-changing beauties to be derived to landscape gardening from the mere principle of motion, adds, that the eye delights no less in an air of perfect liberty, and that in the embellishment of grounds, all appearance of narrow confine or limit should be sedulously avoided,

illustrating the position by a well-drawn picture of the disgusting effect of the contrary practice, as yet occasionally to be seen in the dull and obtrusively circumscribed domains of our feudal ancestors :—

Quand toujours guerroyant vos gothiques ancêtres
Transformoient en champ clos leurs asiles cham-
pêtres,

Chacun dans son donjon, de murs environné,
Pour vivre sûrement, vivoit emprisonné,
Mais que fait aujourd'hui cette ennuyeuse enceinte
Que conserve l'orgueil et qu'inventa la crainte ?
A ces murs qui génoient, attristoient les regards,
Le goût préféroit ces verdoyants ramparts,
Ces murs tissus d'épine, où votre main tremblante
Cueille ou la rose inculte, on la mûre sanglante.

Chant i.

Our Gothic sires, by wars unceasing storm'd,
Their rural mansions into camps transform'd ;
Each chief, secure from rude alarms to dwell,
Lurk'd in a dreary dungeon's gloomy cell.
But say what end each dull entrenchment serves,
That fear erected, and that pride preserves ?
To walls that frown o'erhung with dismal gloom,
True taste prefers those mounds of various bloom,
Where the fringed thorn its purple fruit bestows,
And the hand trembles as it plucks the rose.

One of the most decisive proofs of taste and skill in the creation of scenery, is shown in the happiness and facility with which the accidental features of art or nature are made to blend with the landscape you are about to form ; and, accordingly, the French poet insists upon this as among the first accomplishments of him who aims at picturesque effect ; pointing out at the same time how best he may avail himself of the neighbouring bridge or cottage, town or spire ; or of the windings of the adjacent stream, or the vicinity of the magnificent ocean. In doing this, however, he cannot but regret how seldom nature, time, and art, and man, combine to bring the richest accidents of landscape, and with their happiest result, before us ; a sentiment which naturally carries the imagination of the bard to regions more fortunate in these respects than our own, and he apostrophises the classic realms of Greece and Rome in strains, which have been naturalised in the pages of our anonymous version, with a taste, a feeling, and enthusiasm, which may vie with the tone and execution of the original.

O plaines de la Grèce ! ô champs de l'Ausonie !
 Lieux toujours inspirans, toujours chers au génie ;
 Que de fois, arrêté dans un bel horizon,
 Le peintre voit, s'enflamme, et saisit son crayon,
 Dessine ces lointains, et ces mers, et ces îles,
 Ces ports, ces monts brûlans et devenus fertiles,
 Des laves de ces monts encor tout menaçans,
 Sur des palais détruits d'autres palais naissans,
 Et, dans ce long tourment de la terre et de l'onde,
 Un nouveau monde éclos des débris du vieux monde !

Helas ! je n'ai point vu ce séjour enchanté,
 Ces beaux lieux où Virgile a tant de fois chanté ;
 Mais, j'en jure et Virgile, et ses accords sublimes,
 J'irai, de l'Apennin je franchirai les cimes ;
 J'irai, plein de son nom, plein de ses vers sacrés,
 Les lire aux mêmes lieux qui les ont inspirés.

Chant. i. *

Ye vales of Greece ! ye dear Ausonian groves !
 Inspiring haunts, that genius ever loves !
 How oft, enchanted by your blushing skies,
 The painter feels his glowing raptures rise !

* These lines, which form part of the first book of "Les Jardins," in the earlier editions, were afterwards transferred to the latter part of the second, and occupy the same place in the most recent impressions. I have given them here, however, as their version occurs as a part of the first book of the anonymous translation of 1789.

Draws the rich landscape, and the sea and isles,
The ports, and burning hills where plenty smiles ;
There lavas fierce their flaming torrents pour !
From ruins old there rising temples tow'r !
From sea and land in rude confusion hurl'd,
There into being bursts a new-born world !

Alas ! I've never rov'd those vales among,
Where Virgil whilom tun'd his sacred song ;
But by the bard I swear, and lay sublime,
I'll go ! O'er Alps on Alps oppos'd I'll climb ;
Full of his name, with all his frenzy fir'd,
There will I read the strains those beauteous scenes
inspir'd.

In quoting the latter part of this version some years ago in my *Literary Hours*, I took the liberty of slightly altering the concluding line ; converting it, for the sake of a little more harmony and energy, into an Alexandrine ; a licence of which I have continued to avail myself in the present paper.*

Immediately subsequent to the passage I have just given, De Lille enters into a consideration of

* *Literary Hours*, vol. ii, p. 236. 4th edition.

the then two rival modes of laying out grounds in France; the gorgeously symmetrical, as planned by the skill of Le Notre; and the simply and wildly natural, as taught by our celebrated countryman Kent; and whilst doing this, and referring to the royal seats of Marly and Versailles, as the most splendid specimens of the first of these modes, he brings forward an allusion to the magic creations of Ariosto and Tasso, and deems them rivalled, if not surpassed, by the wonder-working hand of Le Notre. But we should here, in justice, recollect, that, notwithstanding this appeal, it is, perhaps, to Tasso's description of the gardens of Armida, that we are indebted for the first, and, doubtless, the best precept, towards the formation of natural and picturesque scenery; namely, to imitate nature in such a manner, that the art by which the resemblance is achieved should be totally concealed from view. The passage is so pre-eminent in beauty, and so vitally essential in its bearing to the very existence of landscape-gardening, that I cannot resist the temptation of introducing it here; especially when it is recollected how influential it necessarily must have been in

the production of a purer taste; and when I further add, that it forms, as it were, a very apposite prelude to the close of the first book of the earlier editions of "Les Jardins," which introduces a celebration of the Paradise of Milton, an episode of which the greater part has been admirably rendered by our anonymous translator. Tasso may be considered, indeed, in the following stanza, as the very parent and herald of the art he has so beautifully described:

Poi che lasciar' gli avviluppati calli,
 In lieto aspetto il bel giardin s'aperse.
 Acque stagnanti, mobili cristalli,
 Fior varj, e varie piante, erbe diverse,
 Apriche collinette, ombrose valli,
 Selve e spelonche in una vista offerse.
E quel, che'l bello e'l caro accresce all' opre,
L'arte, che tutto fa, nulla si scopre.

Gerusalemme Liberata, Cant. xvi. Stanz. 9.

When through the lab'rinth they had made their way,
 Before their eyes the lovely garden lay.
 Still lakes of silver, streams that murmuring crept,
 Hills, on whose sloping brows the sunbeams slept,
 Luxuriant trees, that various forms display'd,
 And valleys, grateful with refreshing shade,

Herbs, flow'rets gay with many a gaudy dye,
 And woods, and arching grottoes met their eye.
*What more than all enhanc'd those beauties rare,
 Though art was all in all, no signs of art were there.*

HUNT.

From these lines, most assuredly, did Spenser
 learn to

call in Art

Only to second Nature, and supply
 All that the nymph forgot, or left forlorn : *

and from the same source did Milton catch the
 first hint of that work

. . . where not nice Art in curious knots,
 But Nature boon pour'd forth on hill and dale
 Flowers worthy of Paradise ; while all around
 Umbrageous grots, and caves of cool recess,
 And murmuring waters down the slope dispers'd,
 Or held, by fringed banks, in crystal lakes,
 Compose a rural seat of various view. †

And from the forced display of art which De
 Lille has just been recording in the regal gar-

* Mason's English Garden, Book i. l. 445.

† English Garden, Book i. l. 453. ; see also, Paradise Lost,
 Book iv. l. 241 to 264, part of which passage is here inserted.

dens of France, does he turn, with all a lover's yearning, to this exquisitely natural picture of our inspired countryman. It is a passage which seems to breathe fresh charms from the graceful simplicity of its English dress. Tired of the glare of obtrusive splendour, the poet calls for what may touch the answering heart, and he tells us,

Aimez donc des jardins la beauté naturelle ;
 Dieu lui-même aux mortels en traça le modèle.
 Regardez dans Milton, quand ses puissantes mains
 Préparent un asile au premier des humains,
 Le voyez-vous tracer des routes régulières,
 Contraindre dans leur cours des ondes prisonnières ?
 Le voyez-vous parer d'étrangers ornemens
 L'enfance de la terre et son premier printems ?
 Sans contrainte, sans art, de ces douces prémices
 La nature épuisa les plus pures délices.

Chant i.

O, in your gardens love wild Nature's plan ;
 For God himself the model gave to man !
 When Milton's hands the bless'd asylum wove,
 Where our first parents wander'd rich in love ;
 Did he with frigid rules each path restrain ?
 Did he in fetters vile the waves enchain ?

Did he a load of foreign splendours fling
 O'er earth's soft infancy, and earliest spring?
 No ! artless, unconfined, there Nature bland
 With loveliest fancies deck'd the laughing land.

He then hastens to transplant some of the most beautiful features of Milton's Eden, and concludes the episode with a picture worthy of the divine poet whom he is indirectly eulogising, and tinted, indeed, with the very colours of that matchless artist :—

C'est là que les yeux pleins de tendres rêveries,
 Eve à son jeune époux abandonna sa main,
 Et rougit comme l'aube, aux portes du matin.
 Tout les félicitoit dans toute la nature,
 Le ciel par son éclat, l'onde par son murmure.
 La terre, en tressaillant, ressentit leurs plaisirs ;
 Zéphir aux antres verts redisoit leurs soupirs ;
 Les arbres frémissaient, et la vose inclinée
 Versoit tous ses parfums sur le lit d'hyménée.

Chant i.

There blushing like the rising morn, while love
 Beam'd from each eye, Eve sought the nuptial grove
 And to her youthful lover's longing arms
 Obsequious yielded all her virgin charms.

The genial hour exulting Nature hails,
Their sighs ecstatic swell the gentle gales,
Murmur the waves, fair smile the heav'ns above,
And joyful earth congratulates their love ;
Whisper the groves, the rose inclines her head,
And flings fresh odours o'er the bridal bed.

In the editions subsequent to that from which the version whose merits we are considering was made, there occurs, immediately after the episode of Milton's Eden, a long description of Blenheim, occupying more than a hundred lines, and including several very beautiful passages ; but of this digression, the only notice that can at present be taken, is, on my part, to lament that it had not been inserted in time to fall beneath the pen of the anonymous translator.

The specimens, indeed, which have already been given of the occasional merits of his version, must, I should imagine, unite the regrets of the reader of the original with my own, that he had it not in his power to exert his talents in the transfusion of these supplementary lines ; regrets which will be heightened as we advance further in the work, not only from the recurrence of similarly situated passages in the re-

cently augmented editions of the French poem, but from the increasing beauty of those extracts, which it will be my pleasing province to select from the residue of this first and early attempt to introduce M. De Lille to an English public. Let us not forget, however, in this place, the consolation which has been held out in the preceding number, that the most essential, and highly-finished parts of this noblest work of the Gallic bard, are to be found as well in the earliest as the latest impressions.

(To be continued.)

No. VI.

Thou smiling queen of every tuneful breast,
Indulgent Fancy! from the fruitful banks
Of Avon, whence thy rosy fingers cull
Fresh flowers and dews to sprinkle on the turf
Where Shakspeare lies, be present.

AKENSIDE.

It was on the morning of the Vigil of St. John the Baptist, 1615, one of the loveliest which the season had afforded, when Shakspeare and his friends, including Montchensey and his daughter, the younger Combe, and Mrs. Hall, set off, after an early breakfast, on their excursion to Charlecote-House. As the distance from Stratford was not much more than three miles, and they had time for the performance of their pleasant task in the most leisurely manner, they preferred walking to any mode of conveyance.

Every thing conspired, indeed, to render the exercise they were about to undertake, even to such an invalid as Montchensey still was, and

while the heats of the day were yet unfelt, in a high degree delightful ; for a gentle shower had fallen during the early part of the preceding night, and the breeze swept by with freshness, health, and fragrance on its wings. To Montchensey in particular, who had only within these few days ventured forth from confinement, it seemed, as it were, an opening paradise, and he was eloquent even to rapture on the gratifications he so keenly felt.

The occasion was, in fact, worthy of the rapture it inspired ; for, whether the eye, the ear, or the faculty of smell, were considered, the appeal to the senses was alike perfect and exquisite. It was just that period when the clouds had ceased contending with the growing light ; when the mists had risen like the vapours of an accepted offering, and the landscape was kindling into life and beauty. The dew-drops, those stars of the morning, glistened on every leaf ; a livelier verdure mantled over the fields ; a richer colouring glowed upon the flowers, and the Avon, winding and doubling through its fertile valley, now partially concealed by overhanging wood, and now sweeping unshaded through

pasturage of the most vivid green, was seen laughing and sparkling in the sun-beams.

The breath of heaven, meanwhile, was whispering through the trees; the sound of the cattle cropping the crisp herbage, fell distinctly on the ear, and the melody of the feathered world was heard in ever-varying strains of gratitude through every copse and grove; while perfumes of the most delicious odour, from the clover, the bean-flower, and the meadow-sweet of the plains, from the honeysuckle, sweet-briar, and musk-rose of the hedges, stole upon and enriched the air.

Invigorated by the balmy coolness of the breeze, and interested by the features of the vale, which, at frequent turns of the road, opened up new beauties, the green and lively tinting of the home landscape being contrasted with the soft blue haze of distant hills, the party wandered on, heedless of time, and either commenting on the scenes before them, or absorbed by the reminiscences they were calculated to suggest.

They at length reached the park gates, and here Montchensey, on whose mind every thing

connected with Shakspeare had made an indelible impression, recollected, what tradition had been careful to preserve, that it was to these gates the young bard had affixed the pasquinade which had so materially contributed to hasten his flight from Stratford, and turning to him with a smile, he enquired if the lines yet dwelt on his memory, and whether they might venture to request a repetition of them.

“Mere doggrel, Master Montchensey,” answered the bard, “and therefore not worth repeating. I wish, indeed, they were buried in oblivion; for though I still think Sir Thomas exhibited more warmth and animosity than the occasion called for, and I well remember being pleased with the opportunity of bringing him on the stage, under the character of Justice Shallow, yet the verses in question, the offspring of youthful petulance and unbridled resentment, were coarse and exasperating in a high degree. The worthy knight, I have reason to believe, never entirely forgave their severity; but I must add, in justice to the present possessor of Charlecote, that, if he has not forgotten the transaction, he reviews it without a feeling of hostility;

for, since my return to Stratford, I have experienced from him nothing but kindness and hospitality."

"I am happy to hear so decided a proof of his good sense," replied Montchensey, as they entered the park, the interesting appearance of which soon absorbed all their attention. It was, indeed, independent of its association with the fame and fortunes of the bard, a scene of great beauty; but to the present party, who viewed Shakspeare with much of that enthusiasm which has only fallen to the public mind within the last century, it was in a very high degree attractive.

"And it was here, my dear Sir," said Helen, addressing the poet, "among the sheltered glens and romantic solitudes of Fulbroke park, beneath these deep and lofty woods,

whose boughs are moss'd with age,
And high tops bald with dry antiquity,

that you were tempted to commit that trespass which, so fortunate for the lovers of the drama, cast the colour of your future life."

As she uttered these words, the breeze sighed

with a soothing and delicious murmur through the branches of the ancient avenue of oaks beneath which they stood, while, at the same moment, a few vagrant deer were seen bounding across the extremity of the vista.

“Yes, my sweet Helen,” cried the poet, emerging with his friends from the broad shadow of the trees upon an open and extensive lawn, “to yonder spot, called Daisy-hill, then, and now, the keeper’s lodge,” pointing to a small house distantly situated in the park, “was it my fate to be carried, on detection in this adventurous amusement. My fellows in the sport had fled with a precipitation which I disdained to imitate; and here, in a state of jeopardy not much to be envied, had I to wait for some time, until a message from the hall summoned the poor culprit to a severer trial. But before we visit this scene, still present to my memory in all its once humiliating features, you would doubtless wish to see somewhat more of these rich glades and woodlands, which long before I had the misfortune to be entangled with my deer-loving friends, had formed my favourite haunts, and were to me, indeed, in all my youthful cares,

and lonely meditations, a source of never-failing delight."

"May I not infer then, my friend," cried Montchensey, as with a perseverance which bade defiance to all common obstacles, the party had now reached the interior depths, and almost pathless solitudes of Fulbroke park, "that we are indebted to your wanderings here for the many exquisite sketches of forest scenery which delight us so much in your play of *As You Like It*, and which form so fine an accompaniment for the character of the melancholy Jaques?"

"See," exclaimed Helen, her expressive eyes beaming with delight, as she pointed to a huge oak, whose twisted roots hung fantastically over a rivulet hurrying with loud murmurs to the Avon, while the rays of the sun just tinted, as they passed, one side of its moss-grown trunk, "does not yonder woodland picture most emphatically justify your supposition? for was it not here that the kind-hearted though sarcastic Jaques lay moralising on the wounded deer!

'To day, my lord of Amiens and myself,
Did steal behind him, as he lay along
Under an oak, whose antique root peeps on
Upon the brook that brawls along this wood.'"

Shakspeare smiled, and turning to his daughter, "You see, Susanna, that your partiality for your father's productions, however great, is in danger of being completely rivalled." "Yes, my dear Sir," she replied, the tears of rapture starting as she spoke, "I love Helen Montchensey, and revere her parent for the taste and enthusiasm which they feel for your writings. I can well remember, for the day is indelibly fixed on my memory, when first I accompanied you hither, how vividly was brought to my recollection the enchanting solitudes of the forest of Arden, and I can well remember, too, that as we sate, not far from this sequestered spot, and on the banks of this very stream, and whilst our minds were rapt in contemplation of the wild and lone grandeur of these gigantic trees, you confirmed my ideas of similitude by allowing that the first draughts of the woodland scenery of 'As You Like It,' were founded on the reminiscences of early life, when it was your most delightful recreation to wander through the glades of Fulbroke park."

"It is even so, my love," returned the bard, "nor has the lapse of years in aught diminished my attachment to these almost pathless solitudes."

I can still lose myself beneath their twilight gloom, in the same luxury of reverie, and my imagination still bodies forth those fairy visions which were wont to haunt my footsteps here in early life. Let us now, however, disentangling ourselves from the intricacies of the forest, reseek the Avon, for we have yet to traverse a considerable part of the adjoining grounds of Charlecote, and Sir Thomas, whom I yesterday apprised of our intended visit, may possibly be awaiting our approach."

The party immediately, therefore, though reluctantly, quitted the romantic recesses of Fulbroke, and crossing the Avon, on whose banks were reposing several herds of deer, and which winds through the grounds at the rear of Charlecote-house, they entered the home enclosures, with the view of approaching the mansion by the grand front, and through the noble avenue of trees which led up to it. Montchensy seemed greatly pleased with the appearance of the house as it rose before them through the stately trees in all its Gothic grandeur; it was on a large scale, in the form of the letter E, built of brick with stone coigns, and

octagon turrets at each corner, and had been erected in the first year of the preceding reign. A massy gateway, resembling a barbican, and flanked by towers, admitted them into a spacious court, from which the front of the building with its stone-shafted windows, and lofty portal surmounted by armorial bearings carved in stone, were seen to great advantage.

They were ushered into the Great Hall, which was lighted by an immense bay or bow window, that looked, between gigantic shafts of ponderous stone-work, into the court; and here they were met by Sir Thomas Lucy, who welcomed them with great cordiality, and shaking the bard most heartily by the hand, "I am right glad, Master Shakspeare," he said, "when any thing induces you to visit the old manor-house:" then turning to Montchensey, who seemed attentively surveying the objects around him, "I have endeavoured, Sir," he remarked, "to preserve this hall as nearly as possible in the state in which it was left by my father; and our good friend here, whose early intimacy with this portion of the building, however involuntary on his part, has thrown around it a great addi-

tional interest, will tell you I think, for his first impressions beneath this roof," he added with a smile, "were not, I have reason to believe, of an evanescent kind, that my efforts have not been unattended with success."

"Body of me, Sir Thomas," cried the bard, "so entirely are the features of this place what they were in my youthful days, that I could almost fancy myself once more the culprit, when, surrounded by your father's game-keepers, I stood abashed at the wrathful indignation which lowered in his worship's countenance."

"Say you so?" exclaimed Montchensy, looking around with increasing interest and curiosity, whilst at the same time Mr. Combe was relating to Helen some anecdotes which tradition had connected with Charlecote and the poet's misfortune. This hall had been, in fact, the place to which Shakspeare, after some hours confinement during the night in the keeper's lodge, had been carried early the ensuing morning, and it was, indeed, in every point of view, a very fine specimen of what constituted this important part of a large manor-house in the days of Elizabeth and her successor. It was vaulted,

and of considerable height, and hung round with the trophies and paraphernalia of hunting, hawking, and archery. At one end was a large gallery, and immediately opposite the bow-window, filled with the armorial bearings of the family, was the fire-place, or hearth, for wood fuel, of a width and depth that seemed to speak of the revelry and good cheer to which this noble apartment was destined during the winter months. A table of great length and massive construction, one extremity of which was so contrived as to answer occasionally the purposes of a shuffle-board, occupied the centre, whilst at its head stood a curiously carved arm-chair, of dark oak, with a high back and triangular seat, to which Shakspeare directed the attention of Helen, telling her, at the same time, that it was in that very chair his worship sate when he had the ill luck to be brought before him; a declaration which had scarcely escaped his lips, when Montchensey, glancing an arch look at Sir Thomas, pounced into its ample seat, and, turning an eye of assumed gravity and anger on the bard, exclaimed in a tone correspondent with the occasion, " You varlet! you have beaten

my men, killed my deer, and broken open my lodge!" "But not kissed your keeper's daughter," retorted the bard smiling. "Tut, a pm! this shall be answered;"* rejoined Montchensey, rising from his state, whilst a burst of merriment and surprise rang through the hall, and a more than usual pleasure lightened in the eyes of Helen on witnessing this sally of returning vivacity on the part of her father. "Marry, my sweet mistress," cried the poet, patting Helen on the cheek, "I am right glad to see your father in such a merry vein. I think we shall send him back to Wyburne Hall an altered man." A look of ineffable sweetness and gratitude formed the reply of Helen, whose attention was immediately afterwards directed by Mr. Combe to the emblazoning on the stained panes of the bow-window. "There," said he, in those quarterings you see the three *white lices*, so humorously memorized in the '*Merry Wives of Windsor*.'" "Yes," remarked Sir Thomas, who overheard the allusion, "those are my father's arms;" then, laughing with great glee, and clapping his friend Will somewhat lustily

* See *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Act i. Sc. 1.

on the shoulder, he quaintly added, “all his successors gone before him have done’t, and all his ancestors that come after him may: they may give the dozen *white laces* in their coat.”* But come, my friends,” he continued, “we will now, with your good leaves, quit this old hall, which, though I delight to inhabit with a blazing fire during the winter season, is now too much littered with hawk-perches, long-bows, and hunter’s poles, to be altogether as convenient as I could wish; and, although as Master Silence has truly said or sung,—

‘ ’Tis merry in hall, when beards wag all,’

yet I think the dining-room will afford us, at present, a more suitable place for refreshment.”

This proposal, however, after many acknowledgments of Sir Thomas’s hospitality, was about to be declined by Shakspeare and his party, when the worthy knight broke in upon the excuses of the bard by declaring that he could admit of no refusal, and shaking him heartily by the hand, he added, in a tone of peculiar pleasantry and good humour, and with a

* *Merry Wives of Windsor*, Act. i. Sc. 1.

most significant cast of countenance, "By cock and pye, Sir, you shall not away so soon — I will not excuse you ; you shall not be excused ; excuses shall not be admitted ; there is no excuse shall serve ; you shall not be excused." Then, ringing the bell, he called out as the servant entered, "Some pigeons, Davy ; a couple of short-legged hens ; a joint of mutton ; and any pretty little tiny kickshaws, tell William Cook."*

"But really, my good friends," continued Sir Thomas, as his servant, in no small perplexity and amazement, left the hall, "setting all joke apart, I cannot think of your leaving Charlecote without your seeing Lady Lucy, whom I expect in every moment from the park, and who is anxious, I know, to welcome Mrs. Hall and her young friend."

There was no resisting this appeal, and, accordingly, Shakspeare and his party were ushered to the banquetting room, the former intimating to Sir Thomas as they passed, in reply to a hearty invitation to dinner, that he was under the necessity of returning to Strat-

* King Henry IV. Part 2. Act V. Sc. 1.

ford to receive two or three gentlemen whom he had engaged to meet the Montchenseys.

: On entering the room, they were not greeted, it is true, with precisely the same articles which the knight had so facetiously ordered, but a light and elegant cold repast was on the table; and on being joined by the lady of the house, who in a few minutes came in from her walk with two of her children, they slightly partook, more out of compliment than from appetite, of what was placed before them.

Lady Lucy was a lovely and pleasing woman, and received her visitors, and more especially Shakspeare, for whom she entertained a very sincere admiration, in the most cordial and gracious manner. "I am most delighted to see you, my dear bard," she said, "on this, perhaps the most poetical morning of the year, for we are approaching, as you well know, the mysterious Eve of Midsummer, and if ever mortal had a claim upon the affections of the Queen of Faery, time out of mind the tutelary guardian of this awful night, you must be the man. You shall positively," she added, laughing, "become a candidate, maugre all the opposition

of contending sorcerers and spirits, for that great achievement of St. John's Eve, the discovery of the wonder-working *fern-seed*:* though I doubt, even if success were to attend your efforts, whether Titania could confer upon you through such, or any medium, greater potency or more magic influence over the human heart than what you have already been gifted with."

"Indeed, my gracious lady," cried the bard, "this beautiful morning must have inspired you with an overflowing vein of fancy ere you could thus so partially estimate my powers; but

* "It was the belief of our credulous ancestors, that the *fern-seed* became visible only on St. John's Eve, and at the precise moment of the birth of the Saint; that it was under the peculiar protection of the Queen of Faery, and that in this awful night, the most tremendous conflicts took place, for its possession, between sorcerers and spirits; for

The wond'rous one-night seeding ferne,

as Browne calls it, was conceived not only to confer *invisibility at pleasure* on those who succeeded in procuring it, but it was also esteemed of sovereign potency in the fabrication of charms and incantations. Those, therefore, who were addicted to the arts of magic, and possessed sufficient courage for the enterprise, were believed to watch in solitude during this solemn period, in order that they might seize the seed on the instant of its appearance." — *Shakspeare and his Times*, vol. i. p. 329.

beware how you intoxicate a poet with praise, especially at this season of the year, when the influence of Phœbus, you know, is proverbially liable to heighten imagination into what has been called a Midsummer madness."

"I have no fear of its effects in relation to yourself, my kind friend," she replied, "for the fit has been upon you, and we know the result; and much, indeed, do I wish that you would take it into your head to *Dream* again. But, to say the truth, you are chiefly indebted for my allusion to the superstitions of this day, to a circumstance which has just now occurred during my walk in the park, where I observed several young women dressed with more than usual care and neatness, busily engaged in searching amongst the plantations, and, on enquiring what object they had in view, I was told they were seeking for a plantain tree, under the root of which they expected to find a small coal, which if dug up this day precisely at noon, and placed under their pillows at night, would infallibly enable them to dream of their future partners for life; a spell or charm of which I scarcely remember to have heard, numerous

as are the credulities connected with the approaching Eve of St. John." *

"It is an awful time, my lady," said the poet half in jest, "and one peculiarly interesting to the simple love-lorn maiden, more especially when engaged in the fearful occupation of watching by the midnight taper, or sowing hemp seed in the church-yard; and though I can perceive my fair young friend here," slyly looking at Helen as he spoke, "is smiling as it were in conscious superiority to the influence of these wild traditions, yet the time may come when even by her, incredulous as she now appears, the Vigil of St. John shall be recollected with tender though with tremulous hope, and hailed in all its shows of promise."

"Indeed, my dear Sir," said Helen blushing, whilst a sigh involuntarily stole from her bosom, "I am not quite so spell-proof, even at present, as you imagine; and though I shall probably, in spite of your sly prediction, neither watch nor sow, yet I have always felt strongly im-

* For an account of this superstition, see Aubrey's *Miscellanies*, p. 103, and Drake's *Shakspeare and his Times*, vol. i. p. 333.

pressed with at least one of the visionary terrors of the coming eve; the belief, now so prevalent, that he who shall fast on Midsummer Eve, sitting in the church-porch, will at midnight see the spirits of those who are to die in the parish during that year, approach and knock at the church door, precisely in the order of time in which they are doomed to depart.*

“It is certainly one of those superstitions,” remarked Shakspeare, “which, from the object held in view, is well fitted to call forth the most solemn and appalling interest; but it is one also, amongst many others, justly chargeable with a too daring and unhallowed species of curiosity; and, on this account, perhaps, it has been related, as a mode of deterring from the attempt, that, some years ago, one of a company of young men who were said to be watching on this night in the beautiful porch of Stratford church, having fallen into a profound sleep, his ghost or spirit, whilst he lay in this state, was seen by the rest of his companions, knocking at the church-door; a visitation, in all human pro-

* Vide Shakspeare and his Times, vol. i. p. 330.

bability, the result of their own fears, but which they had the folly to communicate to their associate, as soon as he awoke; and the effect on his mind was such as to lead to despondency and madness, and, ere the year had closed, to the verification of the omen by his death."

Here the stroke of a clock in one of the turrets gave notice that the morning was wearing away, and Shakspeare and his friends, though highly gratified by their visit, were under the necessity of hastily taking leave of Sir Thomas and Lady Lucy, time having passed away so rapidly as scarcely to allow them the opportunity of reaching New-Place by the hour of noon.

On re-entering Stratford, they observed its inhabitants busily preparing for the celebration of the Vigil of the Saint, every man's door being shadowed with green birch, long fennel, Saint John's wort, orpin, and the like, interspersed with garlands of flowers, and with lamps ready trimmed for the illumination, which was to commence after sun-setting, and last through the night.

Shakspeare, on his return, not only found the neighbours whom he had invited to his table, already met, and including Mr. Thomas Russel, Mr. Somerville of Edstone, Mr. Anthony Nash, Mr. Hamnet Sadler, and Dr. Hall, but one, also, whom he had been long wishing, though little expecting, to see, his poetical son, Ben Jonson, who, being on his way to visit a relation near Wenlock Abbey, in Shropshire, had deviated some miles from his road, in order to pay his respects to his earliest dramatic friend, Will Shakspeare.

The meeting between these two *now* celebrated men, was in the highest degree frank and cordial. They had not seen each other for more than two years, and though for some time previous to the retirement of Shakspeare from the stage, the public had considered them as rival candidates for fame, yet this fancied antagonism had not for a moment interrupted their friendship, or vitiated their due estimation of each others talents. On the contrary, Jonson loved Shakspeare with an ardour almost filial, and never ceased to consider him as the

most original and creative genius which poetry had hitherto seen,

The applause, delight, and wonder of the stage, as he afterwards termed him; whilst the latter returned the affection of honest Ben, with warmth, and with a sincere and just admiration for his learning, judgment, and inexhaustible vein of humour.

“ Give me thy hand, my dear Ben,” exclaimed the bard of Avon; “ right glad am I to see thee! Marry, this chance makes amends for all disappointments!—I had begun to think my old friends in the city had forgotten me.”

“ Why, Master Shakspeare,” replied Jonson, returning the salutation in his usual blunt manner, and with the utmost glee, whilst at the same time, however, the dewy lustre in his eye told the feelings of his heart, “ if you will linger here picking of daisies, and babbling of green fields, instead of rejoining your former fellows and goodwishers round a bowl of sack at the Mermaid, God’s my life! it cannot chance but you will sometimes slip even from the recollection of your warmest admirers; though I must

say for myself, and that truly too, that go where thou wilt, mine excellent friend, the memory of Will Shakspeare, his mind, and manners, will never away from my heart."

"I believe it, Ben, I most sincerely believe it," rejoined Shakspeare, "nor would I wish a better or more learned advocate with posterity, when I am gone, than what thou mayest prove."

"Master Shakspeare," replied Jonson with great animation, take my word for it, you will want none. 'Sdeath! I question if my own productions, built as they are on the adamantine basis of antiquity, and founded, I may venture to say, on the very rock of dramatic philosophy, will have a longer date. But prythee, my kind Will, a cup of your best Canary, for, i'faith, the heat of the morning, and the dustiness of the roads, have well nigh rendered my throat as dry as a potsherd."

Shakspeare smiling at the characteristic burst of self-applause which his learned friend had thus ingeniously contrived to include in his complimentary address, immediately ordered a flagon of his best wine, and turning to him, "I must make you acquainted," he said, "with my

worthy guests here, the Montchenseys of Derbyshire, lovers of the drama, eye and judges too, I can assure you."

It was, indeed, a singular and most unexpected gratification, both to Montchensey and his daughter, thus to behold, beneath the same roof, the two greatest dramatic poets of their country; for Jonson had, by this time, attained the zenith of his reputation, having already produced these four exquisite comedies whose humour, in spite of all local and temporary allusion, must claim an ever-during celebrity. And though in the attributes of the higher order of poetry, they very justly considered Ben as immeasurably beneath his great contemporary, yet such was the strength and discrimination of his characters in the department in which he excelled, so much had the public been in the habit of comparing them together, and so many were the anecdotes in circulation respecting both their friendship and their rivalry, that it was scarcely possible to have encountered the society of any individuals which, in a literary point of view, was better calculated to excite intense interest,

than that now offered by the accidental meeting of the poets of Macbeth and Volpone.

The contrast, indeed, which existed between the two bards, as well in person and manners, as in genius and talent, gave a raciness and power of impression to their converse and appearance which could not fail to strike even the most careless observer. For whilst, in his figure, Jonson was large and athletic, in his features stern and sarcastic, in his temper egotistic, confident, and overbearing, the reverse of the picture, both as to countenance and disposition, was, as we well know, the allotment of his more amiable companion. In sincerity and singleness of heart, however, in wit and humour, and knowledge of mankind, they were nearly on a level; and as Jonson could not but feel, and would sometimes freely acknowledge, the vast superiority of Shakspeare in fertility of imagination, and in his powers of exciting terror and pity, so would Shakspeare, at all times, duly reverence and appeal to the learning, judgment, and correct classical taste of Jonson; feelings and acknowledgements which, though sometimes transiently perturbed by spleen on one side, and

light raillery on the other, ever maintained between these remarkable men an intercourse of kindness and esteem.

It may readily be conceived, therefore, that when the company at New-Place sate down to dinner, which they did almost instantly after Ben had quaffed off his glass of Canary, and had received the salutations of the newly arrived party, few, if any, would be willing to break in upon those enquiries and recollections which very soon began to occupy the feelings, and, in a great measure, the conversation of the long-separated poets. The business and routine of the table, however, and the necessary attention on the part of Shakspeare to his guests, admitted, for a time, of little, save general remark; nor was Ben unmindful of his new associates; he paid the most marked attention to the ladies of his friend's family, and was particularly struck with their visitors from Derbyshire. He was, in fact, not only a skilful physiognomist, but an excellent judge also of female beauty, and he found employment for both tastes in contemplating the appearance of Montchensey and his Helen; the deep traits of sorrow and of suffer-

ing in the energetic countenance of the father, and the lovely, and almost seraph-like expression in the features of the daughter.

As soon, however, as the ceremonies of the table were over, and the party had retired to the banqueting-bower in the garden, than Shakspeare, filling to the brim a goblet of Ben's favourite liquor, and turning on him a look of the utmost complacency and kindness, "Health and long life to thee, my noble friend," he exclaimed, "and thrice welcome to the banks of Avon! We shall teach you, ere you leave us, I would fain hope, to love the rural deities."

"I thank you, Master Shakspeare, I heartily thank you," replied Ben, strongly affected, "and I would it were in my power to tarry with you for a while; for you have gotten here a goodly dwelling and a rich; friendship, love and beauty are around you I can well perceive, and that cheerfulness to boot, which glows and kindles in a cup of old Canary, in the which, my most excellent friend, I now crave leave to drink to your happiness, and that of your family and friends."

"By my troth, Ben, we'll not part in haste,"

cried Shakspeare ; “ for so long is it since we have met, and so many enquiries have I to make of thee after our old friends and cronies in the city, that we cannot suffer you to peep in upon us and begone.”

“ I cry you mercy, Master Shakspeare,” rejoined Ben, “ but I must away i’ the morning. In good truth, I have stretched a point already to reach you ; for had it not been that I myself was right anxious to see you, and stood pledged, moreover, to our friends at the Mermaid to report to them touching your health and conditions, I must, perforce, for a season at least, have foregone what I now enjoy.”

“ Marry, then, we’ll make a night on’t ! and the eve of St. John shall, for thy sake, my dear Ben, ever sound sweeter in mine ears in all time to come. But tell me, how fare our noble brethren at the Mermaid ?”

“ Fore heaven ! Master Shakspeare, if we have had a jovial night, or a mirth-moving fit, since you left us, I’m a sous’d gurnet ! An you do not come amongst us again, our *symposia* will languish into very dullness, and our wit become as thick as Tewksbury mustard. There’s Beau-

mont and Fletcher, and Selden, and Cotton, and Carew, choice spirits once, and full of matter, and who were wont to put their whole souls into a jest, sit now all *a-mort*, and lack a prompter ; and as for the theatres, were it not that I now and then present them with a piece of the right quality, full of pith and just conceit, the glass, as it were, and mirror of the times, the profession of an actor would be stark naught, as far at least as novel wares could find it occupation."

"May'st thou long live, my worthy friend," exclaimed Shakspeare, "to furnish food and recreation for the learned and judicious ; for those who know a good play when they hear it, and have the conscience to praise what they understand ! And sure I am, that whilst the author of the *Alchemist* survives, neither drama nor actors stand in jeopardy. But speaking of actors, hast thou heard or seen aught, of late, of my kind fellows, Burbage, Hemynge, and Condell ? Thrive they, and doff the world aside, as managers and players, or do they talk, after my example, of turning truant to the stage ?"

"Odslife ! my gentle host," rejoined Ben, pouring out a sparkling bumper of Canary in

answer to a challenge from Montchensey, " my memory had well nigh played me a treacherous trick. The rogues, as I live, for I told them that I hoped to get a glance of thee as I journeyed into Shropshire, prayed me to tender their best affections, and to say, they were afeard you had forgotten both them and their vocation: and i'faith, my dear Will, I begin to entertain a modicum of their suspicions. But, surely, thou hast not altogether discarded our classic Thames for the banks of the Avon, nor resigned the sock and buskin to dally solely with the nymphs again of thy native stream! 'Slight! I shall expect to hear of thee once more conning *doloroso* sonnets on love and friendship, and green leaves! and now I think on't, that same noble lord, to whom thou hast dedicated so many of these *crambo* compositions, for thou knowest, Will, I do not love sonnets, lamented to me the other day, and the tears stood in his eyes as he spoke, that thou shouldst have so completely forsaken thy old haunts at the Globe; adding, in the which I most heartily bore a part, that the stage, with but one or two exceptions,

which shall be nameless, hath been drooping in despair ever since thy departure !”

“ Master Jonson,” interposed Montchensey, and rising at the same time with an expression of deep enthusiasm, “ give me your hand ! An I do not place you in my heart, aye in my heart of hearts, for what you have now so kindly said and urged, never trust me more ! Yes, Master Jonson, much as I laud you for your truly classic and most judicious works, for your right pithy, humorous, and ever-to-be-admired comedies, I praise you still more for the warmth of friendship, and deep feeling of esteem which, I now plainly see, notwithstanding some peculiarity in your manner, you inwardly cherish for our ever honoured host ; a friendship, the memory of which, in spite of all that malevolence, now or hereafter, may bring forward to the contrary, shall endure to distant times ! I drink peace and God’s blessing to you, Master Jonson, with my hearty prayers for your success, as well in what you are now trying to effect, by urging our beloved Shakspeare to a re-union with his Muse, as in your own more immediate labours for the stage.”

“Master Montchensy,” replied Ben, greatly struck with the energetic tone of his address, and flattered at the same time by the frank and honest warmth with which he had expressed his good opinion, “you are a man after my own heart, and whilst I quaff this flask of Canary to our better acquaintance, I make bold to ask you, after my cordial thanks for your kind wishes on my behalf, that in all which relates to my inestimable friend here, and I say it before his face, you do me but justice against the carplings of a slanderous world: and the knaves shall know it too, ere long. In the mean time, Master Montchensy, I am right glad to find I may reckon upon you as my ally in the affair, and could we but secure your charming daughter here, as our advocate. I don’t say but we should carry the day.”

“Indeed, my dear Sir,” said Helen Montchensy, blushing, and bestowing on the well-enamoured bard one of her most bewitching regards, “greatly as we are indebted to you for your own valuable productions, and more particularly for the lyric parts of your delightful masques, which for elegance and sprightfulness

both of thought and measure, are amongst my especial favourites, you will powerfully add to our obligations if you can but succeed in persuading our kind host to resume his dramatic career; for, after such a *last* piece, as he has been pleased to give us, though erringly, I trust, as to the use of the term, in his exquisite *Twelfth Night*, it is impossible for the public not to wish, and, indeed, considering all things, not to claim, that the farewell epithet should prove a perfect misnomer."

"Body o'me, Master Shakspeare," cried Jonson, somewhat exhilarated by the mellow raciness of the wine, and the touching smiles of youth and beauty, "an this do not restore you once more to the arms of Thalia and Melpomene, I know not what will." Then turning to Helen, with as much gallantry as the constitutional roughness of his manners would admit, "My kind affections to you, Mistress Helen," he continued, holding up a goblet of choice Canary, "praise from the lips of beauty hath ever been held most dear by the genuine bard; and whilst I would fain hope it may have its due weight with our admired contemporary here, let me, on

mine own part. I see in his face a
heart, and that, passing for his in your
sight, as I now come about in the
add in the words of my own. I have
taught to speak my mind. I have
accords with my feelings. I have
Then, rising up, and passing for his in the
hands of the messenger. I have
burst forth in a word of my own.

" Drink to me with your eyes.

And I will pledge with mine.

Or leave a kiss that in my cheek

And I'll not look for wine.

" The cheer that from the soul and the

Doth not a little give.

But might I of your wine and cheer

I would not change in time.

" Why how now, Jell? I have seen
speare, smiling and enjoying the wine. I see
art still, I see, the same hand there as ever
flagon of sack, and a piece of my own. I see
the world may seem round as it is. I see
thou wert but some fifteen or twenty years
younger, it might be so. Master Marmion.

now to look well to his charge. But I tell thee what, Ben, if ever I do pen another comedy, and I know not what friendship and flattery, when backed by the rhetoric of my lovely young guest here, may not achieve, thou shalt certainly have a nich in the *Dramatis Personæ*; for, look where I will, I shall not readily, either in a moral or dramatic point of view, find a better sample of rich and humorous, though rough integrity, than thou art like to prove."

"Thou art heartily welcome, Will, to make the most thou canst of me," replied the poet jocosely; "but, gramercy! what have we gotten here?" he continued, pointing to the heavens, which appeared suddenly illumined, as if by the reflection of a ruddy blaze.

"You seem to have forgotten, my good friend," returned Shakspeare, "that we are now on the verge of Midsummer Eve, the vigil of the Baptist, and some of my young townsmen are, I warrant me, anticipating by a bon-fire, the more general rejoicings for the night. Bye and bye, with your permission, and that of Master Montchensey and my neighbours here, we will, as is the custom of the times, grace their

revelry by our presence. In the mean while I entreat you will do honour to my sack."

"An I do not, my kind host, never trust me with a flagon more," cried the convivial bard, as, with the utmost cordiality and glee, he again raised the generous liquor to his lips; and here the conversation assumed a more general cast, the ladies joining in its interest and flow, until, tempted by the beauty of the afternoon, they left the bower to enjoy the more tranquil pleasures of the garden, a recreation which they willingly protracted until supper, which, at that time, was usually served up about six o'clock in the evening, was announced as awaiting them within.

It was not long after this meal which, owing to the early hour of dinner, was then a much more durable and serious refection than what in modern times passes under the same title, before the increasing sounds of mirth and rejoicing were very audible in Chapel-street; and, as the sun approached its setting, bon-fires became more numerous throughout the town. Shakspeare had taken care, in compliance with the good old custom, to order tables to be set

out before the front of his house, well furnished with march-pane, wassail bread, and stout ale; and no sooner had the ruddy orb sunk below the horizon, than, as the evening was peculiarly mild and serene, he invited his friends to accompany him into the porch, observing that this was a rite which, by promoting the offices of charity and kind neighbourhood, had a useful and truly moral tendency.

Few spectacles, indeed, could furnish to a benevolent mind a more interesting subject; for it exhibited the wealthier ranks almost universally contributing with courtesy and familiarity to the harmless gratification and amusement of their less opulent neighbours. Before each substantial householder's door, in fact, were to be seen tables loaded with good things, and the master of the banquet inviting as well strangers as acquaintance, to sit down and partake, with cheerfulness and moderation, of the benefits which God had been pleased to send them. It was the night in the year, in short, which, from time immemorial, had been dedicated to the Christian-like purpose of forgetting and forgiving; when every man esteemed it his

duty to forward and to foster reconciliation, and to labour in the conversion of enmity into love; and hence the fires which were this night every where kindled in the streets, were termed, in allusion to the good and gracious purposes they were intended to commemorate, *bone*, or *bon-fires*.

That flames thus deemed to be emblematic of peace and good-will, should be hailed not only with joyful, but with superstitious rites, was a result naturally to be expected, and, accordingly, it formed not the least interesting part of the amusements of the evening, to behold a number of young men and maidens crowned with garlands of St. John's wort and vervain, and with violets and lilies in their hands, dancing round each fire in mystic movements, and, whilst casting their flowers into its bosom, deprecating the evils, and imploring the blessings of the passing year.*

* I have adhered strictly to the accounts which have been left us of the observance of *Midsummer-Eve* by Stowe, and Bourne, and Borlase.— Vide Stowe in particular, "Survey of London," p. 159. edition of 1618.

There was, indeed, in the whole aspect and getting up of the scene, something truly elegant and fanciful; for nearly every house had been decorated, as we have already mentioned, with shrubs and green branches, interspersed with lamps, which were now lighted up in profusion, converting the twilight, as it were, into an artificial day; and, whilst the elder part of the community sate beneath the silvered foliage on hospitable cares intent, and the younger, with features tinted by the glare of fire-light, were dancing with undiminished glee, music from unnumbered groups, as well itinerant as domestic, sometimes warbling close at hand, and sometimes heard remotely, amused and occupied the ear.

More particularly opposite New-Place, then, perhaps, the best house in Stratford, and, beyond every other distinction, the residence of its beloved bard, and which was now rendered more than usually conspicuous by the taste in which its front had been illumined, and above all, by the party assembled before its porch, had the charm and interest of the evening been concentrated. Here danced the most elegant

group of young people, and here, too, came the best musical performers which the festivity of the occasion had called forth; whilst Shakspeare, in order to encourage their exertions, had not only himself, to a certain degree, provided for their refreshment, but had given directions likewise to his opposite neighbour, Julius Shaw, the honest landlord of the Falcon, and who was then, indeed, the annual bailiff of the Borough, and consequently entrusted with the care and safety of the town, to supply them with whatever might, in his opinion, be thought, within the bounds of moderation, additionally requisite.

It was in one of these pauses for reflection, and whilst all was comparatively still, that the sound of a harp of uncommon sweetness, and evidently touched with a master's hand, was heard approaching towards New-Place. The attention of Shakspeare and his party, and especially of the ladies, was soon almost exclusively engaged by the magic influence of these unwonted tones, which, as they drew nearer, soothed and fascinated the ear with strains of the most delicious melody. Nor was the appearance of the minstrel, as he somewhat slowly came for-

ward, scarcely less interesting than the music he had so happily called forth. He seemed, indeed, as he paused, and bowed with great deference to our bard and his little group of friends, to possess a figure of peculiar symmetry and manly beauty; but his features were partially, and, as it appeared, purposely shaded. In his dress it was easy to perceive that he had copied for the occasion a considerable part of the costume which half a century before had so remarkably distinguished the minstrel tribe; being clothed in a mantle of Kendal green, gathered at the neck by a gorget and clasp, from which depended a silver chain and medal, and girt round the waist with a belt of scarlet velvet. To these were added a turban of black cloth, with a laced fringe which hung half over his face, and surmounted by a plume of the same colour as the girdle, a ruff after the Elizabethan fashion, a doublet and hose of tawny camlet, worked at the wrists and seams with raised green silk, and buskins of dark brown leather fringed with scarlet.

The striking character of this garb, the grace and spirit, both of form and manner, which ac-

accompanied him who wore it, and the skill with which he struck his harp, had drawn after the youthful minstrel a concourse of all ranks and ages, who now stood opposite New-Place in eager and almost silent expectation of once more hearing the sounds which had so lately and so singularly delighted them.

It was not long before they were again gratified; but scarcely had he closed the prelude, and commenced, in a rich and mellow tone of voice, a little madrigal, whose words were those of wild and plaintive tenderness, than a considerable degree of agitation was perceptible in the features and manner of Helen Montchensey. She leant trembling, and with nearly her whole weight, on the arm of Mrs. Hall, and seemed to listen with an almost breathless intensesness of curiosity, mingled with alarm, to the song of the harper. It became evident, indeed, to Mrs. Hall, whose scrutiny had been powerfully awakened by the distress of her friend, that, notwithstanding the semi-veil which shaded the brow and eyes of the minstrel, both Helen and herself had been for some time the objects of his close and unwearied attention; and he had

even contrived during the execution of his interesting little ditty, gradually, and almost imperceptibly, to approach the spot where they stood, so that when Helen, whose eyes had been cast on the ground, as she anxiously listened to the recognition of tones which had never been heard by her without emotion, raised them as the voice seemed to vibrate on her ear, she beheld the minstrel at her side. It was at this moment, and whilst she involuntarily started at the close and hitherto unnoticed approximation of the seeming stranger, that carelessly, as it were, and as if by accident, and whilst his face was turned towards her own, he struck aside the veiling fringe, and instantly as her eye met his, the name of *Hubert* convulsively and unconsciously escaped her lips, and she sank powerless and fainting to the ground.

The confusion and alarm which this incident occasioned were such, that though the exclamation of Helen had reached the ears of her father, and had brought with it the most painful emotions, yet such were his apprehensions for the immediate safety of his daughter, that he suffered her, notwithstanding he entertained

the most violent prejudices against the agent, to be carried into New-Place in the arms of the minstrel, who had, indeed, half accomplished his purpose ere the astonishment of Montchensey would allow him time to reflect.

Fortunately, however, for all parties, Helen had sufficiently recovered her mental powers during the bustle and agitation of her conveyance, to be sensible not only of the delicacy of her own situation, but of the extreme peril which awaited the health of her father, if she suffered any farther interview to take place between him and the minstrel Hubert; and she, therefore, secretly implored the latter, whilst she yet lay in his arms, if he had any value for her happiness or peace of mind, or the well-being of her parent, to fly from New-Place, and even from Stratford, the moment after he had set her down beneath the roof of her friend.

In vain, therefore, after the hurry which accompanied this strange occurrence had subsided, did Shakspeare and Montchensey look around for him who had given origin to it. He had, in fact, now certain of the safety of his late lovely charge, and whilst all were still in some measure

engaged about the person of Helen, stolen unperceived out of the room, nor could any subsequent search or enquiry made during that evening, though prosecuted with great eagerness by many who had witnessed the transaction, ascertain whence he had come, or whither he had gone.

The effect, in the meantime, of this rencontre, both on the mind and personal appearance of Montchensey, was remarkable. The same wild and melancholy abstraction which so peculiarly distinguished his looks and manner, when first seen by Shakspeare, and which had been in a great degree dissipated by his enthusiastic attachment to the character and company of the poet, now recurred with, if possible, augmented power. Nor were the sorrows and distress of Helen, conscious of being at least indirectly accessory to the sufferings of her father, less entitled, perhaps, to commiseration; for she had, of late, uniformly endeavoured, and with a solicitude prompted by filial affection of no ordinary intensity, to prevent the possibility of what had now happened.

To Shakspeare, who, beyond all the sons of

men, was intimately conversant with every shade of human feeling and emotion, the character of Montchensey had been already so far developed, as to excite within his breast no inconsiderable degree of interest ; and the events of this evening, which seemed to throw additional mystery around both father and daughter, had still further stimulated his curiosity ; more especially when, in the features of the youthful minstrel, which, during the late tumult, had been for a few minutes fully exposed to his view, he beheld a striking resemblance to a dear, and distant, and, perhaps, deceased friend.

It was, therefore, with no unwilling ear that he now heard Montchensey, as soon as he had recovered sufficient composure for the purpose, repeat his request of an early visit from the poet at Wyeburne Hall ; announcing, at the same time, his intention of leaving Stratford, partly perhaps in consequence of what had just occurred, early the ensuing morning. With this invitation indeed, seconded, as it was, by the earnest entreaties of the unhappy Helen, who, with tears in her eyes, petitioned for compliance, Shakspeare found it impossible not to acquiesce ;

whilst the ladies, Dr. Hall, and Ben Jonson, who had all been included in the proposed visit, declined that honour for the present; the latter, however, declaring, with a hearty shake of the hand, and a bumper to their next meeting, that he would not fail to see how the cellars at Wyeburne Hall were stored in the course of the autumn, adding at the same time, that, as he was likewise on the wing, he would, with their leave, escort Master Montchensey and his daughter, on a part of their road the next morning.

With this arrangement, and with a promise on the part of Shakspeare, that the mission of honest Ben should not be altogether fruitless, but that he certainly would, if health were allowed him, rejoin his old friends at the Mermaid for a few days during the winter, the party separated for the night.

(To be continued.)

No. VII.

I range in fancy's consecrated round,
And meet the poet on a poet's ground,
Nor seek "mere rigid" truth of time and place,
But truth of manners, character, and grace.

MATHIAS.

Not more than a fortnight had elapsed from the departure of Montchensey and his daughter from Stratford, when Shakspeare, having received another urgent invitation from his new friends, determined on carrying his promised visit into effect.

It was on the afternoon of the third day of his journey, at a time when he entertained hopes of reaching the place of his destination in the course of a very few hours, that, having crossed one of those long and dreary wastes so frequent in Derbyshire, he began to descend into a deep and narrow valley. So precipitous, indeed, was the declivity, that it was with difficulty either he or his servant, though they dismounted from

their horses, could keep the animals from falling. The scenery, however, which at every step began to unfold itself, was of a character well fitted to attract attention even from the most careless mind, much more from that of the mighty minstrel who now stood gazing on its confines. It appeared, in fact, as if the chasm opening at his feet, had been effected by some stupendous convulsion of nature, which had riven the rocks asunder to their very base, disclosing at the same time the waters of a torrent, which had rolled and raved along its course for unnumbered ages in darkness and concealment.

Nor while such was the impression which the first view of this singular glen, or rather abyss, conveyed to the mind, were its details, though sometimes blending romantic forms with those of stern and rude sublimity, ineffective in completing the picture; which was, indeed, in all its parts, worthy the pencil of Salvator Rosa, and, what is still higher and more efficient praise, of the genius of him who now contemplated it.

Formidable, in short, as were the jaws or portals of this valley, its savage yet majestic wildness seemed to start forth with additional

features, as our bard pursued its downward course. Here rose cliffs, from whose faces, abrupt and perpendicular, and tinted with every hue which mosses and lichens could supply, were projected huge masses of the purest limestone, so singularly formed by the sportive hand of nature, that being partially covered with a net-work of ivy, they had all the appearance of the towers, buttresses, and mouldings of some ruined but gigantic castle; and further on, and deeper in the dell, and towering several hundred feet in height, were seen rocks whose scathed and naked summits over-browed and darkened the rugged road which lay winding at their feet; whilst, midway from their fractured sides and yawning chinks, grew several aged oaks and mountain ashes, whose fantastic roots and writhed branches, streaming in the air, threw over the whole scene a grotesque yet gloomy grandeur.

Striking, however, as these features were, they became immeasurably enhanced in their effect, both by the peculiar sinuosity of the glen, and by the bold character of the stream which watered its bosom; the former powerfully exciting the imagination, as well by a glimpse of

recesses into which, from the devious direction of the valley, the eye could not penetrate, as by the perpetual shutting-in, and folding, as it were, into each other, of the various precipices, which from the like cause were every where presented to the view ; whilst the latter, pouring along its rugged bed, either lashed into fury by obstructing rocks or narrowing straits, or foaming with continual murmur over shelves stretching across its channel, stamped on all around it a character of turbulent yet diversified sublimity.

It was whilst absorbed in the contemplation of this romantic scenery, and whilst visions not less varied and sublime than those which physical nature now offered to his view, were kindling in the mind of Shakspeare, that he was suddenly startled from his reverie by the explosion of a musket or carabine, which echoed, as it immediately was, from numerous faces of the rocks, seemed to fill the valley with dissonance and confusion. Scarcely, indeed, had he time to turn his attention to the spot whence the first report had seemed to issue, when a second and a third were heard in different directions, and presently there appeared to start

from the cliffs and rocks, as if by the creative call of some magician, the forms of armed men, who, after a moment's pause, and whilst shouting to each other in tones of exultation, were seen descending, or rather rushing on all sides towards the travellers, with a rapidity which set at nought the most fearful inequalities of ground.

Against such an attack it was instantly evident all resistance must be vain, and Shakspeare, therefore, whose presence of mind seldom if ever forsook him, prepared to receive the banditti with as much seeming composure and nonchalance as the suddenness and strangeness of the irruption could possibly allow him to collect. Unfortunately, however, his servant, not possessing any similar strength of mind, attempted to escape by flight, and it was not before the discharge of a carabine, whose contents passed close by his person, had brought him to his recollection, that he was again found at his master's side.

The foremost of the banditti had, in the meantime, nearly reached the spot where Shakspeare stood, calling out as they approached him, that

if he offered to move, they would instantly fire, a threat which he answered by composedly sitting down upon the fragment of a rock, at whose base the torrent unceasingly dashed, as it hurried onward with an arrow's speed to shoot from a ledge of limestone into a deep recess or caldron boiling in the depths below.

To the demand which immediately followed for their baggage, their money, and their horses, the astonished poet had scarcely framed a reply, when, at the sound of a bugle-horn, succeeded by a voice of authority and sway, the robbers, who had already begun to rifle their victims, fell back, and a young man, whose attitude and manner were those of command, and whose garb and figure were alike bold and imposing, rushed into the midst of them, denouncing, as he came forward, vengeance against him who had dared, without his orders, to fire upon the strangers. No sooner, however, had he fixed his eyes upon the bard, who was calmly expostulating with his plunderers, than he seemed for a moment rooted to the spot; then, suddenly recollecting himself, he called out to his followers in a tone of mingled astonishment and in-

dignation, "Know ye, my comrades, whom ye are thus insolently rifling? By Heaven!" he continued, as they stood gazing on him with surprise and disappointment in their countenances, "had any one of ye injured but a hair of yonder head," pointing to the person of the poet, "no power on earth should have redeemed him from the fury of my arm; he should have answered the violation by the instant forfeiture of his life! Nay, scowl not on me, ye dastards," he pursued, "but hearken whilst I tell you, that in him whom ye have but just now threatened with violence, you behold one to whose words ye have often listened with delight, to whose influence over the heart, hardened though ye be, ye have often paid the tribute of relenting nature! — our great and glorious Shakspeare!"

Never were the power and popularity of dramatic poetry more strikingly evinced than on this singular occasion; for, as if electrified by the name, these sons of rapine, men of desperate character and broken fortune, though not devoid of education, shrunk momentarily back repentant and horror-struck; and then, in the next instant, and as if by one simultaneous movement,

they sprung forward to the feet of the poet, depositing there, with every proof of reverence and regret, the property they had already seized, whilst from those who had borne no part in the spoliation, but who had followed the footsteps of their leader, rose shouts of acclamation and applause.

It was, indeed, a moment of most profound and gratifying interest, and which was enjoyed in an almost equal degree by the freebooter and the bard ; for whilst the latter felt a deep and hitherto unexperienced conviction of the extent and influence of his fame, the former no less exulted in the opportunity which had so unexpectedly been afforded him for the safety and protection of unrivalled talent. As soon, therefore, as the tumult had in some measure subsided, " My friends," exclaimed this predatory chief, turning to those who had been foremost in the assault, " ye have nobly redeemed, both in mine, and, I should think, your own opinion, the error which has been committed." Then vailing his bonnet, and advancing toward the bard, " If any thing," he said, addressing him with every mark of humility and admiration, " were want-

ing to show how deeply enthroned is the genius of Shakspeare in the hearts of his countrymen, the incident which has now occurred would of itself be sufficient. He will pardon then, I trust, in consideration of the homage thus singularly and unaffectedly paid to his power over human thought and feeling, the violence which has so lately endangered his person and property; and he will permit me also to express, how highly I feel gratified in having been, through the mere recollection of his features, an humble instrument in bringing about the sudden revolution just witnessed in the dispositions and conduct of men, from their situation and habits not very prone to pay much deference to either moral or literary merit."

The result, indeed, was one which whilst it called forth the most pleasing and heart-felt emotions in the bosom of Shakspeare, could not but excite there, at the same time, from the novel and extraordinary circumstances with which it was connected, sensations of the deepest surprise; nor were the manners and appearance of the leader of these lawless men, or the style and tenor of his language, in the least

degree calculated to abate his astonishment. He was, in fact, in all respects fitted to impress upon the mind a vivid idea of what tradition had handed down of the wild but gallant and romantic character of the ancient English outlaw or banished man, and it appeared to Shakspeare as if he saw before him a faithful copy of his own Valentine or Orlando.

There was, moreover, something in the cast of his countenance, and in the contour of his figure, which seemed to strike the bard with the idea of having seen them before; but the former was so deeply bronzed by the efforts of art, and the latter in a garb so very dissimilar to the costumes of society, being a strange and fanciful admixture of what was at that time thought peculiar to the very contrasted characters of the forester and free-booter, that all chance of recognition was hopeless.

“My friend,” replied Shakspeare, “for such, from the nature of your interference, I may truly term you, you are entitled to my best thanks, not only as the protector of my property and, perchance, of my life, but for the singularly liberal, and, to me, highly flattering expression

of feelings which has accompanied your good offices. Nor can I refuse," he continued, turning on the surrounding banditti a look of forgiving kindness and benignity, "my acknowledgments to men who, whatever I may think of the general character and tendency of their occupation, have done honour to themselves and human nature, by the prompt admission of an appeal which could only have its due weight in minds susceptible of just and generous emotion. Indeed I cannot choose but marvel, and you will excuse, I trust, the freedom of the observation, that you, my friend, who evidently possess the advantages both of taste and education, and your comrades too, who can, like yourself, thus enthusiastically show their esteem for dramatic talent, should adopt this very dangerous and predatory mode of life; it is one which, from the violence almost necessarily attending its career, would seem inconsistent with that love for the gentler arts to which I owe my present security. But, pardon me, situated as I now am, I can have no right to push the enquiry; let me hasten, therefore, to say, ere we part, for I must reach my destination, if possible, before

nightfall, that if in aught I can assist you, should you feel disposed to seek a reconciliation with the laws of your offended country, you may command my utmost services."

"In the name of myself and my companions," returned the youthful adventurer, scarcely repressing in his voice the agitation which struggled in his features, "I most heartily thank you; but our lot in this life is, I apprehend, finally determined, nor are we willing to become abject petitioners for the pardon of transgressions to which several of us have been driven by a stern and overwhelming necessity;—but you must allow me to escort you on your way, as far at least as shall be consistent with your safety; for some of my comrades are abroad, and though we are usually satisfied with the spoliation of deer-parks, and the adjacent forests of the peak, yet, should you chance to meet them, I cannot ensure you against a repetition of what you have already suffered in this secluded valley, through which, indeed, I suspect you have been led by unacquaintance with the track of the country, for this place has, of late,

been too notorious not to have the most circuitous route preferred to the risk of threading its terrific mazes."

This was a proposal too useful and acceptable to be rejected; and as soon, therefore, as Shakspeare had signified his assent and his sense of obligation for the offer, the marauders, at a signal from their leader, dispersed; not however without taking a cordial though a somewhat clamorously expressed leave of one who, at some period or other of their former lives, when the capital and not the country was their scene of action, had been the means of affording them many of their best remembered and most rational delights.*

* Of the great popularity of Shakspeare's plays amongst all classes of the people, and of the great superiority which they possessed in the public mind over the best productions of his contemporaries and immediate successors, nothing can afford us so decided a proof as the verses of Leon. Digges, prefixed to a spurious edition of Shakspeare's Poems in 1640. Speaking of the originality of the poet's dramas, he says, —

But O what praise more powerful can we give
The dead, than that, by him, the *king's-men* live,
His players; which should they ("his dramas") but have shar'd
his fate,
How could *the Globe* have prosper'd?

“ And now, my admirable friend,” said their chief, mounting a horse which he had ordered

And then, addressing the Dramatists of the day, he tells them to apply to the *Ball*, the *Cockpit*, and the *Fortune* companies, and not to approach *Blackfriars* :—

I do not wonder when you offer at
Blackfriars, that you suffer: 'tis the fate
 Of richer veins; prime judgments, that have far'd
 The worse, with this deceased man compar'd.
 So have I seen when *Cæsar* would appear,
 And on the stage at half-sword parley were
Brutus and *Cassius*, O how the audience
 Were ravish'd! with what wonder they went thence!
 When, some new day, they would not brook a line
 Of tedious, though well-labour'd *Catiline*;
Sejanus too, was irksome; they priz'd more
 “ Honest” *Iago*, or the jealous *Moor*.
 And though the *For* and subtil *Alchymist*,
 Long intermitted, could not quite be mist,
 Though these have shamed all the ancients, and might raise
 Their author's merit with a crown of bays,
 Yet these sometimes, even at a friend's desire,
 Acted, have scarce defray'd the sea-coal fire,
 And door-keepers: when, let but *Falstaff* come,
Hal, *Poins*, the rest, — you scarce shall have a room,
 All is so pester'd: Let but *Beatrice*
 And *Benedick* be seen, lo! in a trice
 The cock-pit, galleries, boxes, all are full.—
 Brief, there is nothing in his wit-fraught book,
 Whose sound we would not hear, on whose worth look:
 Like old-coined gold, whose lines, in every page,
 Shall pass true current to succeeding age.

one of the retreating party instantly to send him, "whither are you bound? for unless you can finish your expedition in three or four hours, and the sun, you see, is sinking fast towards the horizon, you had better pass the night with us, though we can give you not a more sumptuous lodging than the shelter of a mountain cave."

"Were I not in my own estimation," returned the bard, "within a few miles of the end of my journey, I would cheerfully follow your advice; but, doubtless, you can tell me with perfect accuracy, from your intimate knowledge of the neighbourhood, how far it is to M———ll Dale on the banks of the Wye, for thither I am going."

"Well, indeed," answered the youth, starting, and scarcely repressing a deep sigh, "am I acquainted with that lovely valley; and I conclude, of course, that the Hall, the ancient mansion of the Montchenseys, which is little more than an hour's brisk riding from the spot we stand upon, is the friendly roof to which you are hastening."

"It is even so," replied Shakspeare, "and I should imagine from your manner and mode

of speaking, that you have some knowledge of its inhabitants."

"To be at all familiar with this part of Derbyshire, and not to know the Montchenseys," said his guide, "is impossible." "And in what estimation," asked the poet, not a little surprised at the marked agitation of his companion, "are they held in the neighbourhood, for I confess myself to be little more in regard to them than the acquaintance of a day?"

"The family of Eustace Montchensey," returned the youth, "has been settled at Wyeburne Hall for many centuries, and whatever may be thought of its present lord, whose conduct is mysterious, and whose temper is somewhat gloomy and misanthropic, the ladies of his household, his amiable but unhappy wife, and his daughter, the beautiful Helen, are entitled to the highest esteem, and the former, indeed, to no small share of commiseration."

As he uttered these words, an expression of indefinable emotion, in which pity, awe, and anger, seemed to blend or chase each other with the rapidity of lightning, passed over his features; but he instantly afterwards pulled his

bonnet over his brow, so as to shade, in a great measure, the upper part of his countenance. In this manner they passed on for some time in silence and abstraction, Shakspeare musing on the strong interest which his fellow-traveller appeared to take in what concerned the Montchenseys, and recollecting also with no slight degree of astonishment, that from the lips of neither husband nor daughter, had a syllable escaped, during their residence at Stratford, which could lead to the supposition that such a being existed as the wife of the one, and the mother of the other.

At length, just as the sun was descending in all his glory, they reached the edge of a steep declivity, from which they beheld, cast as it were suddenly at their feet, one of the most delicious valleys that eye had ever seen or fancy ever dreamt of. It seemed, indeed, as if nature had intended it for a perfect contrast to the wild and savage scenery they had lately left, so peaceful and so lovely were its features, yet so diversified and picturesque was its every aspect. "This," said the freebooter to his companion, with an emotion he was unable to control,

“ this is M——ll Dale; earth contains not a gem of greater beauty, a paradise of purer sweets, and yet to me it has been a source of ——.” Here he paused, whilst Shakspeare, who had stood for some moments on the brow of the glen, absorbed in admiration and delight, now turned an enquiring eye on the countenance of his companion, and was surprised to find it marked with traits of anguish and remorse. “ Yes,” continued the youth, pointing to the westering orb, whose disk, encurtained by the richest tints of heaven, glowed the very image of calm beauty and repose, “ I had hoped, like yonder sun, to have sank to rest with nature smiling round me, but my course is now in the track of the storm, and I shall set in gloom and desolation !”

There was something in the tone and imagery of this exclamation, and much likewise in the manner by which it was accompanied, that struck both upon the heart and the imagination of Shakspeare, and he could not help entertaining for the youth, what he had not experienced before, a feeling of sorrow and compassion. “ Not so, my young friend,” he exclaimed, looking upon him at the same time with an expression

of the utmost benevolence, "the clouds which now gather round your path, devious and erring as that path assuredly is, shall one day, I predict, and that too not a distant one, be dissipated. It is not in human character, it is not in human nature, that thoughts and feelings such as you have now given utterance to, should dwell with aught that is permanently or greatly wrong. No, to resume the imagery you have just called forth, like yonder beauteous luminary, who is sinking but to rise with renovated healing on his wings, you shall again be blessed and blessing. Suffer not then the sight of this lovely landscape, soothing and tranquil as should be its effect on every mind, to excite in your bosom emotions of such an opposite character!"

"It was not so once," returned the youth, in a voice almost stifled with anguish, and then, after a deep pause, suddenly conscious, as it were, of the agony he had betrayed, he seemed to shake off the load that oppressed him. "Do you mark, my friend," he continued, pointing down the valley, "yonder distant turrets, that, touched as they are by the last rich crimson of the setting sun, seem to start from the wood

which envelopes them like points of glowing fire? Those turrets rise from Wyeburne Hall, the mansion of the Montchenseys, and beyond them, far as the eye can penetrate, and illumined by one bright gleam of light, you may yet just discern the village spire. Farewell! as I now appear to you, I must not be seen in this beloved valley—but we shall meet again. Your road,” he then added, “winds down this steep descent, and through these groups of trees to the waters of the Wye, whose current you can just perceive from this great height, stealing through the bottom of the glen; it will lead you, after passing through a park, whose glades and antique oaks will remind you of your own delightful imaginings, where your exiles wander, and your fairies sport, to the very lawn which fronts the house; and now, once more adieu!” And as he said this he spurred his horse from the verge of the descent, whilst Shakspeare, who felt his interest for this young adventurer increasing every moment, called out to him to stop: he did stop, and as soon as they had again met, the bard asked to be entrusted with his name, and the means of future communication. “I feel most

honoured by, and grateful for the request," replied the youth, "and do promise that ere long you shall be better acquainted with my history and misfortunes; in the mean time you must be content to know me by the name of Roland the Freebooter; it is an appellation," he added with a smile, "that will excite more terror than satisfaction in those who hear it; but I have, nevertheless, been a leader of the lawless spirits whom you have encountered to-day, for good as well as evil;" and again he spurred his horse, and disappeared.

"There is something very extraordinary in all this," thought Shakspeare, as he mused for a few moments on the language and bearing of his late companion; but the necessity of attending to the security of his footsteps, (for both he and his servant had been obliged from the precipitancy of the path, to once more alight from their horses and lead them,) and the singular beauty of the scenery into which they were now descending, soon dissipated his abstraction.

It was a landscape, indeed, worthy of the pencil of a Claude, and was enjoyed by him who now wandered through its mazes, with all that

feeling and enthusiasm to which his unrivalled imagination may be conceived to have given birth. A glow of golden light, which gradually melted off into extensive fields of amber tint, or faintly yellow green, and then of sober gray, yet lingered in the west, and shed over the whole valley that warm, but soft and harmonising hue, which gives to evening scenery its most soothing and delicious effect. Every object was in repose, except that, at intervals, as the unfelt breeze just stirred the lightest leaves, was heard the murmur of remotely dashing water.

Their track was through a thick wood which clothed both sides of the glen from their base to their summit, occasionally, however, receding from the front of some very peculiar formations of projecting cliff, that shooting upwards in a shaft-like or columnar shape, and stained with every hue that moss and creeping plants could furnish, showed like the relics of some shattered temple or monastic fane. Glimpses of the Wye, softly flowing between banks of the greenest turf, were now caught more frequently as they pursued their downward course; the valley became wider, the road less precipitous, and the

poet was delighted by observing on the opposite and more level side of the stream, various openings, through which were discernible small patches or enclosures of corn, which, though springing up in situations so wood-girt and romantic as to look better fitted for the cell of the hermit than the sickle of the husbandman, gave a soft and pastoral air to all around.

They had now reached the bottom of the descent, where the Wye, taking a sudden bend to the left, poured its pellucid waters, with no little spirit and impetuosity, down a shelf of limestone rock, to pursue its sinuous course with augmenting beauty and serenity, through that still more expanded portion of the valley in which stood the mansion of the Montchenseys. And here Shakspeare, remounting his horse, paced gently onwards by the banks of the Wye, through scenery to which his powers of description could alone do ample justice. Twilight had by this time shed her sober tinting over every object; but the air was balmy and clear, and the evening star had risen. On either side of the stream greensward of the most delicate verdure, interspersed with single oaks, or groups

of ash and elm, rose gradually to a considerable extent, and before him, though yet obscurely seen in the distance, was part of the venerable front of Wyeburne Hall, screened by, and almost hidden indeed, in the depth of its surrounding woods.

Trusting, therefore, to the Wye, which had been represented to him as his best guide, the bard again willingly resigned himself to all those associations and trains of ideas which the uncommon fineness of the evening, and the peculiarities of the scene around him, were calculated to inspire; and it was not until the moon had silvered the walls of Wyeburne Hall, that he found himself at the foot of the lawn, or rather glade, that led gently ascending amidst an irregular line of trees to its very ancient but ample porch. Here, deserting the stream, which took a circuitous sweep once more to the left, to pass through the village situated about a mile behind the site of the manor-house, he soon reached the hospitable roof of his friends.

Montchensey and his daughter had been anxiously expecting him, and the latter had several times during the evening traversed the

lawn, and even skirted the banks of the Wye to a considerable distance, in the hope of seeing him approach; for as the day of his arrival had been previously arranged, they became apprehensive either that some accident had happened from the badness of the roads, or, that owing to the very secluded nature of their situation, he had mistaken his way. It was, consequently, with peculiar satisfaction that, as they were debating upon the propriety of sending out men and horses in search of the belated traveller, they heard Peter's voice, as he swung open the door with singular briskness and vigour, an achievement by the bye of no small difficulty, considering its size and ponderability, announcing the thrice welcome name of Shakspeare.

Few occurrences could have given more sincere pleasure to the inhabitants of Wyeburne Hall, than did the visit of our great dramatic bard; not only as affording them the means of discharging a debt of gratitude casually incurred, but as placing within the archives of their house one of those events of which, as long as human genius is held in due estimation, the noblest families on earth might be proud. Such, at

least, was the light in which the taste and enthusiasm of the Montchenseys, anticipating the verdict of posterity, led them to view the entrance of Shakspeare beneath their roof.

Our poet found his friends, who flew to receive him with all that expression of mingled love and admiration which so remarkably distinguished their attention towards him when visitors at New-Place, in their great summer or withdrawing parlour, a room hung with exquisitely coloured tapestry, and lighted by two very large oriel or porch-like windows, commanding views of the home park, of the windings of the Wye, and of the village spire rising beyond a group of trees.

And here it may be necessary to mention, before we proceed further with our narrative, that Wyburne Hall was one of those old manor-houses which ranked midway between the embattled castle of the feudal baron, and the mere timber-built, or calimancoed mansion of the country squire. It had been originally constructed of sufficient strength to resist any hasty or tumultuous attack ; but the first, or entrance court, together with its massy gateway, had been

removed, and the body of the fabric forming a square with an interior court, was seen rising immediately from the most elevated portion of the surrounding park, which gradually dropped down on three sides to the banks of the Wye, whose stream taking a bold semi-circular sweep in its way to the village, was an object of life and beauty from almost every part of the mansion. It was built chiefly of brick with stone mouldings, had a lofty tower projecting in the centre of its front, and surmounting its porch, and four turrets, one at each corner of the entire quadrangle. The hall, into which you entered directly from the porch, was spacious, had an antique arched roof with sculptured wood of curious workmanship, and was adorned with eight figures of bucks carved in brown wood, and large as life, which were ranged at intervals along its sides. There were, also, on the ground floor of the principal front, beside the tapestried room which we have already mentioned, a library, a back parlour, and a banquetting or dining room, the latter being enriched with several fine pictures from the easel of Hans Holbein. At the upper end of the interior court,

or court of the fountains, as it was called, from two beautiful displays of this kind in its centre, and the lower part of whose sides consisted of open cloisters, was situated, in a direction immediately opposite the hall, a small chapel, elegantly finished in the florid Gothic style; and over the above-mentioned cloisters in each wing was a long gallery, that on the right being hung with a rich collection of family pictures, and above all a suite of chambers; the height, however, of the sides of the court being two stories lower than that of the principal front, whilst the chapel in altitude rose to a level with the entrance tower.

Such were the prominent features of the architectural arrangement of Wyeburne Hall, a fabric then more than two centuries old, and which, though it had undergone some slight internal changes and improvements, in accordance with the taste of the times, had not been violated exteriorly by the introduction of that incongruous mixture of Grecian and Gothic styles so common during the latter part of the sixteenth and commencement of the seventeenth century.

But, reverting to our story; after the first cordial salutations had passed between Shakspeare and his friends, the latter very naturally inquired into what had occasioned such unexpected delay in the arrival of their guest, mentioning, at the same time, how greatly their apprehensions had been excited lest any unforeseen accident should have detained him so much beyond the hour he had thought it probable he should reach them; in replying to which Shakspeare gave a full detail of his having, by mistake, passed through the valley of ———, and of his encounter there with Roland the freebooter.

At the mention of this name he was surprised to observe the agitation into which Montchensey appeared to be thrown; and he could not help adding, "I am afraid, my friend, that your property, nay, perhaps your lives, may be endangered by the neighbourhood of this lawless adventurer and his wild associates."

"I cannot say," returned Montchensey, as soon as he had sufficiently recovered to speak with composure, "that in these respects we have lately had reason to complain; on the contrary, since this fellow, Roland, as he terms

himself, became the leader of the gang, now better than a year ago, this place has remained perfectly unmolested ; nay, indeed, the village itself may look up to him as their protector from every species of depredation. But there is a mystery and pretension about this young man that, connected as they are with some circumstances which have lately occurred, very justly excite my apprehensions ; and his conduct towards you this day, noble and praiseworthy as it is, and indicative of a lofty and cultivated spirit, only adds to my astonishment and suspicions."

"And have you made no representations to government," enquired Shakspeare, "relative to the existence and enormities of these desperadoes?"

"I know not that they absolutely merit the title which you have given them," returned Montchensey, "especially since Roland has assumed the direction of their affairs ; for though we still occasionally hear of a wealthy or obnoxious neighbour having been disburthened by them of his purse, and even of his horse as he journeyed, yet he has nearly, if not altogether, succeeded in limiting their spoliations to the

contents of our forests and deer-parks. Mine, however, from some cause or other which I am anxious to learn, have been lately exempt from all levy of this arbitrary kind; and as the villagers, whose poultry and cattle used formerly to be laid under heavy contribution, now experience a similar forbearance, Roland has, not undeservedly, become a mighty favourite amongst them; and, indeed, if we except the lordly proprietors of venison, with the whole country side; for, though his irregularities are neither small nor infrequent, there is, I understand, a courtesy and gallantry in his bearing and demeanour to the lower orders which reconciles them to all his faults. In short, under the influence of their present chief, these outlaws, once remembered with dread and detestation, and against whom for more than ten years we had all been accustomed to go armed, have now become little other than Robin Hood's men; making free, it is true, with the out-door superfluities of the rich, but sparing at the same time, and even protecting, the poor. These circumstances, together with the conviction which repeated experience has brought home to us, that

all informations lodged against these marauders when even in their worst state, were carelessly received, and still more negligently acted upon, and consequently served but to render our situation still more hazardous, have induced us at present to remain, if not perfectly satisfied, at least altogether quiescent."

"And do you not know who this young adventurer is, or whence he comes?" asked the bard.

"I must confess," replied Montchensey, "that after all our enquiries, and they have been prosecuted with no little eagerness and pertinacity, we are still, as to these essential particulars, altogether in the dark; for the suspicions to which I just now alluded have been very recently formed, and seem, at present, even to myself, too improbable to justify communication. Indeed he is so seldom seen in the immediate neighbourhood of Wyeburne Hall, which, fortunately for us, he appears sedulously to shun, that almost he may be said to be *personally* unknown to us."

"Upon my word, my good friend," rejoined Shakspeare, "much as I have felt interested for

this youth, in consequence of his late courteous demeanour towards myself, your account has given fresh wings to my curiosity. And what does my fair Helen," he added, turning towards her, as she sate attentively listening, but with downcast eyes, to the conversation, "what does she think of this very singular character? May I not surmise, that however justly she may condemn the way of life to which he has attached himself, there is a feeling of sympathy and sorrow in her breast for one so generous and so brave, though yet so erring?"

"And would you not, my dear Sir," said Helen, blushing deeply as she spoke, and then suddenly becoming pale, "would you not have me pity one who, if we may judge from his conduct, has perhaps been driven to this extremity by unhappy and, it is possible, uncontrollable circumstances?"

"Marry, would I, my sweet girl," replied the poet, smiling; "for though I am no apologist of deeds incompatible with the rights of property, yet have I been much struck with this same Roland; there is a buoyancy of mind, and strength of character about him which pleases me much,

and it shall go hard but I will, ere long, with your leave and that of your father's, ascertain not only who he is, but what are his motives of action."

"I sincerely wish you may succeed," exclaimed Montchensey, with a thoughtful and perturbed brow; whilst on the countenance of Helen there sate an expression of timidity and pensiveness, which seemed to indicate an anxious and somewhat alarmed state of feeling.

The conversation, however, soon took a more lively if not a more interesting turn, and after many enquiries had been made concerning their Stratford friends, and a wish had been expressed by Helen that Mrs. Hall had accompanied her father, Shakspeare entered into an animated eulogium on the characteristic beauties of the country through which he had lately passed, describing the partial appearance of Wyeburne Hall, as it struck him in the rays of the setting sun, just previous to his descent into the valley, with all that warmth and enthusiasm, and richness of language, which absolutely paints what it strives to impress.

"A beam of satisfaction lighted up the fea-

tures of Montchensey as the picture came before him, glowing with all the fairy tints which Shakspeare knew to give it. "Yes, my friend," he exclaimed in allusion to a sentiment which had fallen from the poet, "I am indeed truly proud of Wyeburne Hall; it has been the seat of my ancestors ever since the conquest, and many a deed of worth and valour hath tradition treasured to their memory. But, alas!" he added, and a cloud of deep gloom came over him as he uttered it, "I am the last male descendant of my house. A storm at once overwhelming and unforeseen, hath strewed its honours on the ground, and I remain a lone and blighted tree, desolate and withering in the blast of heaven!"

"And can this lovely scion," said his guest, pointing to the weeping Helen, who had clasped her father's knees, "can she be overlooked?" "Oh no, oh no," cried the afflicted parent, raising his fond child to his bosom, "I am much to blame; she is my only hope and stay, the very link to which my being clings; but even for her safety," and he shuddered whilst

he spoke it, "am I in continual apprehension and the dread of losing her sometimes influences my mind as if the event had really happened. But I beg your pardon," he added, starting from his chair; "I take shame to myself for this unseasonable introduction of my domestic sorrows."

As he said this he rang for his servants, and assuming a more cheerful air, "Come, my friend," he exclaimed, leading the way at the same time to the banquetting-room, "let me obliterate my fault by declaring, that notwithstanding what you have just witnessed, never did I exercise the rites of hospitality at Wyeburne Hall with more sincere and heart-felt pleasure than on the present occasion."

They now sate down to a repast in the true Elizabethan style of plenty and good cheer. Montchensey forgot, or contrived to lull to rest, his numerous cares; Helen smiled again with her wonted sweetness and fascination, and, after an hour spent in delightful and unalloyed intercourse, Shakspeare retired to rest, his host marshalling him the way across the hall, and

up a massive flight of stairs, into a large and lofty chamber hung with arras, and situated immediately over the withdrawing-room.

Hither, in a few moments after Montchensey had wished his guest a good night, came the servant of the latter to unpack his master's wardrobe; but with a face so pale and troubled, and with such evident marks of trepidation in it, that Shakspeare, after gazing upon him for an instant or two, as the poor fellow stood trembling with a taper in his hand, called out, "In the name of wonder, John, what is the matter, for thou seemest to have lost the few senses which nature had been kind enough to spare thee?"

"Lord help me, Sir," he answered, looking around him with dismay, "Peter has been telling me such strange stories about this old house, that I am almost afraid to see my shadow in it. I had as lief a hundred times be fired at by those ill-looking fellows that bide in yonder rocks, than be way-laid by these same sprites and goblins, that can glide through a chink, and whisk through a key-hole. Do you know, Sir," he continued, getting up close to his master's

side, and speaking in an under tone, as if fearful of being overheard, "that this very wing in which we now stand, or at least a part on't, as they tell me, which runs backward by the side of an old court yonder, has been shut up, God knows how long, haunted, as they say, by the ghost of a former lady of the Hall, who came by her death in a way too horrible to tell. Just as the clock strikes twelve, Sir—"

"Prythee no more of thy nonsense," cried the bard, somewhat impatiently, "but make haste and put those things into the chest. Thou hast scarcely been more than two hours in the place, and thy head has been filled with all this trumpery!" "Please your honour, Sir, Peter declares ——" "Peter is an ass, and thou art little better," retorted his master, half smiling and half angry; "go, get thee gone, and try, if thou canst, to forget these idle stories."

"So," thought Shakspeare to himself, as his servant very reluctantly quitted the apartment, "if a man now were inclined for the indulgence of the sombre and mysterious, here might he find food for it; for, though I have ridiculed the credulity of this poor fellow, and perhaps

very considerably for his own sake, yet I cannot but acknowledge that, in conjunction with what I have already seen of the character of Montchensey, who seems to labour under the influence of some awful event which has occurred in his family, a tradition of this wild and gloomy cast is but too well calculated to make an impression even upon my own feelings."

It was shortly after these reflections had passed through the mind of Shakspeare, that he sought the blessings of repose; nor were they long denied to one who, though slightly tinctured with the superstition of the times, and therefore not unalloyed with some of the frailties incident to human nature, possessed a heart and intellect, in strength, and worth, and conscious innocence, not yet surpassed by any of the sons of men.

(To be continued.)

No. VIII.

Hear ye, who love to tear oblivion's veil
From the chill tomb, and strew fresh flowers around,
Where ancient sages slumber in the ground,
Come, join with me, and listen to the tale
Which bids neglected worth no more bewail
Her fate obscure.

SIR EGERTON BRYDGES.

THERE is a singular satisfaction in discovering that the place in which you have been many years resident, has, in days long past, given birth to some who have been eminent in their age for philosophy or literature, or arts, and more especially is this the case, if, in the vicissitudes of taste, and the progress of improvement, obscurity should have stolen over their memory and their name; for what can be more delightful than to rekindle a grateful recollection of those to whom their contemporaries have been indebted for hours of elegant amusement, or lessons of persuasive wisdom.

It is with a feeling of this kind that now, whilst the fervid heat of noon disposes to reflection and retirement, I sit down to record what, at this distant period, can be collected of the biography of two *once* celebrated poets, natives of Hadleigh, in Suffolk, WILLIAM ALABASTER, and JOSEPH BEAUMONT; the former highly eminent in his day for the depth of his erudition and the beauty of his latin verses, the latter for his theological attainments, and his vernacular poetry.

WILLIAM ALABASTER was born at Hadleigh, in Suffolk, in 1567. He received the first part of his education at the grammar school of his native town, then in considerable estimation for the talent with which it was conducted.* From

* Hadleigh school can also boast the honour of having educated that profound and accomplished scholar JOHN OVERALL, who preceded Alabaster by a few years, and went immediately from Hadleigh to St. John's College, Cambridge. He was afterwards chosen fellow of Trinity College, and in 1596 he took his degree of D.D. when he was appointed Regius Professor of Divinity, and Master of Catharine-hall in the same University. He became the successor of Dr. Nowell as Dean of St. Pauls in 1601; and was chosen Prolocutor of the Lower House of Convocation towards the commencement of James's reign. His erudition and piety were rewarded in 1614,

the school of Hadleigh he was sent to that of Westminster, and from the latter to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he took the degree of Bachelor of Arts in 1587, that of Master of Arts in 1591, and in 1592 he was incorporated of the University of Oxford. During his residence at Trinity College, Cambridge, he appears to have obtained the patronage of Dr. Still, Margaret Professor, Master of the College, and Rector of Hadleigh, and subsequently bishop of Bath and Wells *; and Wood in his *Athenæ*

by the bishopric of Lichfield and Coventry, and by a translation to the see of Norwich in 1618, which he enjoyed, however, little more than a year, dying there May 12th, 1619.

Bishop Overall was the intimate friend and correspondent of Gerard Vossius and Grotius. He was styled by Camden "a prodigious learned man;" by Wood, "the best scholastic divine in the English nation," and Cosin, bishop of Durham, who erected a monument to his memory in Norwich Cathedral, terms him in the inscription which he placed upon it, "Vir undequaque doctissimus, et omni encomio major."

Overall was the author of the celebrated "Convocation Book;" he was also one of the translators of the Bible, and is mentioned by Mr. Churton, in his life of Nowell, as having written that part of the Church Catechism which includes the sacraments.

* The author of *Gammer Gurton's Needle*.

Oxonienses speaks of him as an ornament to that University, calling him "the rarest poet and Grecian that any one age or nation produced."*

It was probably about the period of 1596 or 1597, and when he had acquired no small celebrity as a classical poet, that he received from the Lord Keeper Egerton, the offer of the Rectory of Brettenham, in Suffolk, which he declined however, as not being equal to his expectations, accompanying the letter which he wrote on this occasion, with a copy of elegant Latin hexameters, addressed to his Lordship, who was then deservedly esteemed the Mæcenas of his age.†

The preferment, however, which he did accept at this period, was that of Chaplain to the Earl of Essex during his enterprise against Cadiz in 1597; on his return from which expedition he was unfortunately induced to desert the Church of England for that of Rome, an apostacy which was speedily rewarded by the confinement of a prison, for he sought to vindicate his change of opinion by a publication under

* Athenæ Oxon. Vol. i. Fast. 144.

† Todd's Spenser, Vol. i. p. ci.

the title of "Seven Motives for his Conversion," an attempt which was not easily pardoned in those days of polemical irritation. "Dr. Alabaster," says one of his adversaries on this occasion, "who published in 1598, by means of private conference with a certain seminary priest, whom in prison he laboured to convert, was by the same priest perverted, so that of a perfect protestant, hee is nowe become an absolute papist, and is for the same imprisoned."*

The controversy to which this defection gave rise, occupied his time for some years, and in 1604 brought upon him an antagonist of the first reputation in his day as a scholar and divine, Dr. William Bedell, afterwards bishop of Kilmore, who wrote an answer to a work which Alabaster had published in defence of his new tenets under the title of "Four Demands."†

* "A Booke of the Seven Planets, or Seven Wandring Motives of William Alabaster's wit, retrograded or removed by John Racster. *Melius est claudicare in via quam currere extra viam.* August, at London, printed by Peter Short, for Andrew Wise, dwelling in Paule's Church-yard, at the signe of the Angell, 1598. 4to. 47 leaves." — Vide *British Bibliographer*, vol. i. p. 543.

† "Among the Lambeth manuscripts (No. 772.)," says Mr. Todd, "there is a valuable and curious work, entitled

Whether the arguments of bishop Bedell, or his own further researches, brought about his re-conversion, is not known; but shortly after this period, he discovered more *motives* for returning into the bosom of his mother-church, than he had ever done for quitting it.

Promotion rapidly followed his re-union with the protestant cause, for his talents both as a scholar and a theologian were too well known, and too highly estimated to be suffered to lie dormant for want of due encouragement. He accepted the rectory of Thorfield in Hertfordshire, was made a prebendary of St. Paul's, and, in 1614, a Doctor of Divinity. The sermon which he preached for his Doctor's degree, had for its text, the first verse of the first chapter of the first book of Chronicles, namely, "Adam, Seth, Enoch," and abounded in recondite and mystical learning.

' A Defence of the Answer to Mr. Alabaster's Four Demands against a Treatise intituled The Catholick's Reply upon Bedell's Answer to Mr. Alabaster's Four Demands.' The letter at the beginning is addressed ' to the Worshipful and my loving friend Mr. Ambrose Jermyn;' and is dated, Bury, this 25th February, 1604, your Worshipp's in Christ Jesus, William Bedell.' " — Todd's *Spenser*, vol. i. p. ci.

After a life occupied to the last in literary and philosophical pursuits, Alabaster died in April, 1640, and in the 74th year of his age.

His works may be classed under the heads of *philology*, *theology*, and *poetry*. In the first of these departments, his "Lexicon Pentaglotton, Hebraicum, Chaldaicum, Syriacum, &c." Folio, London, 1637, may be considered as his chief production, and ranks, without doubt, as the most elaborate of all his publications. It had engaged his attention many years, and was received by the learned world with the admiration due to the industry and erudition with which it had been manifestly constructed.

As a divine, Alabaster, from the warmth of his imagination, and his love of the wonderful and mysterious, was too much addicted to the chimeras of the Cabala, which teach that there exists not word, letter, number, or accent in the Mosaical law which has not some hidden meaning in it, and through which, if rightly interpreted, not only the genuine sense of Scripture may be clearly understood, but even the secrets of futurity unveiled; a doctrine which as Granger observes, "is admirably contrived to make the

scriptures speak any sense, or no sense at all.”*

On this mystical plan of interpretation, he published in 1602, “*Tractatus in Revelationem Christi modo Cabalístico explicatam*,” 4to.; and in 1621, “*Tractatus de Bestia Apocaliptica*,” 12mo. Nor are any of his theological works, indeed, free from the same erudite enthusiasm; for a similar mode of interpretation may be traced in his “*Apparatus in Revelationem Jesu Christi*,” 4to. 1607, and in his “*Spiraculum Tubarum, n.d. Ecce Sponsus Venet*,” 4to. 1633.

The profound oriental learning, indeed, of Alabaster, together with the assumption of a faculty which could penetrate into, and unfold the dispensations of Providence to the remotest period of time, could not fail, in an age prone to the marvellous, to make a strong impression on the minds of his contemporaries. With what faith and admiration he was looked up to, as a person gifted, in this way, with very extraordinary powers, may be learnt from the following

* *Biographical History of England*, vol. ii. p. 169. edit. of 1775.

lines addressed to him by his ingenious and accomplished friend Robert Herrick.

TO DOCTOR ALABASTER.

Nor art thou lesse esteem'd, that I have plac'd
 (Amongst mine honour'd) Thee (almost) the last :
 In great Processions many lead the way
 To him, who is the triumph of the day,
 As these have done to Thee, who art the one,
 One only glory of a million,
 In whom the spirit of the Gods doth dwell,
 Firing thy soule, by which thou dost foretell
 When this or that vast *Dinastæ* must fall
 Down to a *Fillit* more *Imperiall*.
 When this or that *Horne* shall be broke, and when
 Others shall spring up in their place agen :
 When times and seasons and all yeares must lie
 Drown'd in the sea of wild Eternitie :
 When the *Black Dooms-day Bookes* (as yet unseal'd)
 Shall by the mighty *Angell* be revealed :
 And when the Trumpet which thou late hast found
 Shall call to judgment ; tell us when the sound
 Of this or that great Aprill day shall be,
 And next the Gospell wee will credit thee :
 Meane time like earth-wormes we will crawle below,
 And wonder at Those Things that thou dost know.*

* *Hesperides, or Works both Human and Divine, of Robert Herrick, Esq. ; 1648. p. 302.*

Much, however, as Alabaster was latterly renowned for his theological and philosophical acquirements, he had enjoyed early in life, and continued to maintain to the day of his death, a reputation equally great and extensive for the critical acumen of his classical taste and the beauty of his Latin poetry. In 1592, and in the twenty-fifth year of his age, he wrote his "Roxana," a Latin tragedy, which was acted, as soon as finished, at Trinity College, Cambridge, and procured the author the most unbounded applause.* So highly, indeed, was this drama esteemed, that forty years after its first representation at Cambridge, namely in 1632, it issued from the press surreptitiously, and in a very imperfect form, an occurrence which stimulated the author to publish a genuine edition during the course of the same year.

The *Roxana* of Alabaster, though certainly a work of considerable merit, is written as Warton

* "Dr. Fuller informs us," (see his *Worthies in Suffolk*, p. 70.) says Granger, "that when his Latin tragedy of *Roxana* was acted at Trinity College in Cambridge, the last words 'sequar, sequar,' were so hideously pronounced, that a gentleman present fell distracted, and never afterwards recovered her senses." — *Biographical History*, vol. ii. p. 169. note.

justly observes, too much "in the style and manner of the turgid and unnatural Seneca;" but when that elegant and interesting commentator proceeds to say that this drama "has been mentioned by Dr. Johnson as a Latin composition, *equal* to the Latin poetry of Milton,"* he has assuredly charged that upon his illustrious contemporary which he never dreamt of asserting. The passage in Johnson, with the preceding context, is as follows. "I once heard Mr. Hampton, the translator of Polybius, remark, what I think is true, that Milton was the first Englishman who, after the revival of letters, wrote Latin verses with classic elegance. If any exceptions can be made, they are very few: Haddon and Ascham, the pride of Elizabeth's reign, however they have succeeded in prose, no sooner attempt verse than they provoke derision. *If we produced any thing worthy of notice before the elegies of Milton, it was perhaps Alabaster's Roxana.*"† Now it will, I

* Milton's Smaller Poems, apud Warton, 2nd edit. 1791. p. 430.

† Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets, vol. i. p. 76. Sharpe's Edition.

think, be readily admitted, that no *equality* with the poetry of Milton could be intended by these words ; they were meant merely to imply, what is, in fact, really the case, that this drama is, as a classical production, a spirited and extraordinary effort for the period in which it was written. And more especially will this be allowed, when we recollect the youth of the writer, and that, as he has himself told us, it was the work of only a fortnight.

The drama, however, was not the only province of poetry in which Alabaster endeavoured to excel ; he had projected, and in part executed, a species of Epic poem in honour of Elizabeth and her reign, which was to have extended to twelve books, and which he termed ELISEIS.

Of this elaborate undertaking which, notwithstanding the popularity of its subject, was never committed to the press, Mr. Todd, in his edition of Spenser, has given us the following account.

“The *Eliseïs*,” he says, “is preserved among the manuscripts in Emmanuel College, Cambridge ; and is numbered 1. 4. 16. I have been favoured by the master of that society with the

perusal of it. It is entitled *Elisæis, Apotheosis poetica, sive, De florentissimo imperio et rebus gestis augustissimæ et invictissimæ principis Elizabethæ D. G. Angliæ, Franciæ, et Hiberniæ, Reginæ. POEMATIS in duodecem libros tribuendi, LIBER PRIMUS, Authore GULIELMO ALABASTRO, Cantabrigiensi Colleg. Trin.* — It is dedicated to Queen Elizabeth.

The poem opens thus :

Virgineum mundi decus, angustamque Britannæ
 Regnatricem aulæ, et lætis digesta tot annos
 Imperiis, pacisque artes, bellique triumphos,
 Ordier æternæ rerum transcribere famæ.
 Argumentum ingens, &c.

This manuscript, according to Antony Wood, had been formerly in the possession of Theodore Flake." *

Unfinished as the poem was, it appears to have been widely circulated amongst the author's friends, and to have received from them the most unqualified approbation. It must have been commenced very shortly after the comple-

* Todd's Spenser, vol. viii. p. 24.

tion of the *Roxana*; for in 1595, when Spenser published his "Colin Clout's Come Home Again," he thus speaks of the production of his friend who was then in the twenty-seventh year of his age :

And there is Alabaster thoroughly taught
In all this skill, though knowen yet to few ;
Yet, where he knowne to Cynthia as he ought,
His Elisëis would be redde anew.
Who lives that can match that heroick song,
Which he hath of that mightie Princesse made ?
O dreaded Dread, do not thy selfe that wrong,
To let thy fame lie so in hidden shade :
But call it forth, O call him forth to thee,
To end thy glorie which he hath begun :
That, when he finish't hath as it should be,
No braver Poeme can be under sun.
Nor Po nor Tybur's swans so much renown'd,
Nor all the brood of Greece so highly praised,
Can match that Muse when it with bayes is crown'd,
And to the pitch of her perfection raised.

Praise like this, and from such a quarter, must necessarily have impressed the public mind with a high idea of the merits of the Elisëis, and it is, therefore, somewhat extraordinary, that,

although in an unfinished state, the eulogy of Spenser, and the curiosity which such a statement was so well calculated to excite, have not hitherto induced some lover of neglected genius to commit this fragment to the press. It has been mentioned, indeed, by Mr. Malone that, without doubt, Spenser's object in this highly-coloured encomium, was to recommend his friend to the queen's favour, and to procure him that promotion in the church, which he afterwards obtained.* Yet it cannot be conceived that without more than common merit in the poem itself, the author of the *Fairy Queen* would have risked his reputation with his sovereign as a judge in calling her attention to it in so decided a manner.

Alabaster seems to have confined himself (as a disciple of the Muses) almost exclusively to the composition of Latin verses; for of his English poetry only two specimens have been found. These were discovered by Mr. Malone in the Bodleian library, in a manuscript of Archbishop Sancroft's, and present us with two son-

* Malone's *Shakspeare*, apud Boswell, vol. ii. p. 263.

nets, of which "the piety," as he has justly observed, "is more obvious than the poetry; yet Donne," he adds, "and those in that age who admired Donne, doubtless thought them excellent." Of the first of these sonnets, entitled "A New Year's Gift to my Saviour," I shall quote the major division or octant, as a curious instance of that fondness for a play of words or "dalliance with names," so prevalent in the reigns of Elizabeth and James the First.

Ho! God be here. Is Christ, my Lord, at leisure?
Blessed St. Peter, to my King present
This *Alabaster* box which I have sent;
And if he ask how it may do him pleasure,
Tell him I hear that he hath endless treasure.
But hath not vessels half sufficient,
And in this box are many moe content,
Wherein of grace he may bestow large measure.*

The account which has now been given of this once celebrated scholar, and which is, I believe, notwithstanding its brevity, much more full and particular than any preceding attempt, will show that he filled, during his lifetime, a

* Vide Malone's *Shakspeare*, ap. Boswell, vol. ii. p. 262.

large space in the public eye, and that he was deservedly esteemed, as well for the depth and variety of his erudition, as for the elegance of his classical acquirements. It is the record, however, of an individual who unhappily trusted not his fame to his native language, and who has, therefore, only been preserved from oblivion by the casual notice of his contemporaries, and the occasional retrospect of the learned critic. He is, in fact, alone remembered as

The Bard of other days, whom Herrick loved,
Whom Spenser honour'd, and whom Johnson
praised. *

From these scanty notices of one who has appeared and departed like a shadow of times long gone by, let us now turn our attention to a bard whose works will afford us a more interesting field for criticism and illustration.

* There is an excellent engraving of our poet by Payne, from a portrait by Cornelius Jansen, with the following inscription: "GULIELMUS ALABASTER, anno ætatis suæ 66, studii arcana theologiæ, 83."

No. IX.

Intent to rescue some neglected rhyme,
Lone-blooming, from the mournful waste of time,
And cull each scatter'd sweet.

BOWLES.

JOSEPH BEAUMONT, the author of *Psyche*, an Allegorical Epic, and of a collection of minor poems, was born at Hadleigh, in Suffolk, on the 13th of March, 1615. His father descended from a younger branch of the ancient family of Beaumont in Leicestershire, and who died in 1653, had been for many years a woollen manufacturer in Hadleigh, then a very wealthy trading corporation; and being a man not only in easy circumstances, but of great respectability, he had been repeatedly elected into the office of chief magistrate of that town. Very fortunately, also, for the subject of our biography, he possessed, together with a deep sense of religion, a very decided taste for elegant liter-

ature ; and discovering in the early years of his son Joseph a peculiar attachment to letters, he very wisely determined to give him an education corresponding to the promise which his talents seemed to hold forth.

Much, however, as he prized the acquisitions of learning, and anxious as he was that his son, who was the favourite of his hopes, should have every advantage which the age could bestow, he was still more solicitous that these accomplishments should be based on the firm foundation of morality and religion. Apprehensive, therefore, of sending him to such a distance as would entirely remove him from his own immediate influence and inspection, he refused to listen to the suggestions of his friends, who had proposed Westminster as the primary seat of his education, but placed him at the grammar school of his native town, very justly concluding that the discipline which had nursed and produced such scholars as *Overall* and *Alabaster*, was not likely to disappoint his expectations. In fact, young Beaumont prosecuted his studies, whilst resident at this school, with so much assiduity and success, as to render himself, in a very extraor-

dinary degree for his age, familiar with the most writers of antiquity. *TERTIUS* was his favourite author, and it is said that if this degree came he had ever a small edition of his works in the close of his life.

The proficiency thus early acquired enabled him to enter Peterhouse in Cambridge in his sixteenth year; and here the same love of classical learning which had so greatly distinguished him whilst a student in Hadleigh, continued to recommend him to the notice and favour not only of the members of the university, but of the university at large. Not that his disposition and conduct were inferior to him in their kindness and respect; for he was open and unfeigned in his manners, strictly observant of the statutes and regulations of his college, and conforming no less for the sweetness of his temper, than for the fervor and regularity of his devotional duty.

Qualifications such as these very speedily attracted the attention of Dr. COOPER, then master of Peterhouse, and subsequently bishop of Durham, and who was distinguished for his minute observance of the character and deportment of the students committed to his care. He singled

out Mr. Beaumont indeed as an object of his peculiar patronage, and as soon as he had obtained his bachelor's degree, he gave him the first fellowship in his college that became vacant.

It was now that he found himself at liberty to carry into execution the plan of study which he had some time before chalked out as his favourite pursuit; that of familiarising himself with the scriptures of the Old Testament in their native language. For this purpose he commenced, in his twenty-first year, the study of the Hebrew, comparing with the utmost diligence and exactness every version extant with the original, a task which at his time of life has been seldom undertaken, and, if undertaken, as seldom prosecuted with effect. After this appeal to the pure source of religion, he proceeded to read with critical accuracy the primitive writers on Christianity, abstracting and methodising their contents in the most lucid order, and exhibiting strong proofs of the taste and discrimination with which in particular he had digested the learning of *Basil*, and the free and fervid eloquence of *Chrysostom*.

Having employed three years in these im-

portant pursuits, he was called, at the age of twenty-four, to the tutorship of his college, a charge which he sustained with the most exemplary vigilance and impartiality, yet with a sweetness and affability of temper that won for him the hearts of all entrusted to his care. If at any time he assumed the aspect of severity, or the language of reproach, it was in consequence of some instance of immorality or irreligion; for we are told that being "himself assiduous and fervent in paying public homage to the Deity in the college chapel, he had always a strict eye upon the behaviour of his pupils in those sacred offices, and whatever marks of negligence or indevotion he observed in any of them, were sure to be followed by the strongest expressions of his displeasure and indignation: for he looked upon the want of reverence and gratitude to the Author of our life, as a testimony of a base and bad heart; and thought it impossible, that he, who could knowingly fail in these duties to that beneficent Being, could ever be a useful member of society, or a good man."*

* Account of his Life, prefixed to his Minor Poems, p. x.

It was also one of the especial cares of Mr. Beaumont, in the lectures which he regularly delivered to his pupils, to impress upon their minds the deepest love and veneration for their king and country; and he used to speak of it as one of the most pleasing recollections of his life, that in the days of anarchy and rebellion which shortly afterwards occurred, not an individual of the numerous young men who had been placed under his direction, and many of them belonged to some of the best families in the kingdom, hesitated to embrace with cheerfulness and alacrity, and at the immediate risk of life and property, the cause of royalty and the established constitution.

An office of greater weight and publicity now fell to the lot of Mr. Beaumont, being chosen Vice-Proctor or Moderator in the University, the duties of which situation he discharged with more than common zeal and effect, enforcing, as far as his delegated authority extended, a strict and general observance of the statutes. But his residence at Cambridge, and the benefit resulting from his influence and example, were about to receive a long and fearful interruption;

for the storm was now gathering which very shortly afterwards broke with irresistible fury upon the civil and ecclesiastical constitution of the kingdom ; and in 1644, when the Scotch army declared for the parliament, and had commissioned the Earl of Manchester to re-model the University of Cambridge, the tutor of Peterhouse, who was well known for his firm adherence to the cause of his sovereign, was the first to feel the weight of their resentment. He was, in fact, compelled to quit the University, then under the control of the rebels, and being ejected from his fellowship, he retired to his native town of Hadleigh ; and here we are told, “ he formed a little society of *gallant spirits, men of abused merits*, which chiefly consisted of some of his former pupils, and the sons of his great friend and patron Bishop Wren ;” and here also, “ being in deacon’s orders, he constantly performed the daily services of the liturgy in his father’s house, and preached to his little flock every Sunday.”

It was whilst resident at Hadleigh that he employed his leisure hours in the composition of his elaborate allegorical poem, entitled

“*Psyche, or Love’s Mystery, displaying the Intercourse between Christ and the Soul,*” which was commenced in April 1647, and though, in its first edition, consisting of twenty long cantos, was completed before the 13th of March following, and published early in 1648. Nor was this production, extensive as it is, the only fruits of his retirement in Suffolk; numerous miscellaneous poems, both English and Latin, though not published until many years after his death, issued from his pen whilst lingering on the banks of the Brett, his native stream. Indeed nearly all his poetry appears to have been written between the years 1644 and 1653.

Scarcely had our author completed his *Psyche*, when he was induced to leave Hadleigh by an invitation from Dr. Wren, Bishop of Ely, to reside in his house as his domestic chaplain. This prelate, as visitor of Peterhouse, had long known and admired the worth and the talents of Mr. Beaumont, and had, as early as the year 1643, collated him to the rectory of Kelsall in Hertfordshire; to that of Elm with the chapel of Emneth in 1646, and to the seventh

canonry and prebend in the Cathedral church of Ely in 1647. But as these preferments, which occurred during the rebellion, would be considered as little more than nominal, the Bishop was anxious to give him an asylum in his own family; and so affectionately did he become attached to him, in consequence of this domiciliation, that in the year 1650 he bestowed upon him in marriage his step-daughter, Miss Brownrigg, a young lady of the most pleasing manners and amiable disposition, and who was possessed of a considerable estate together with, the manor of Tatingston in Suffolk; and with her at Tatingston-place, in the mutual endearments of domestic society, in the occasional exercise of his professional duties, and in the daily practice of every Christian charity, he passed the succeeding ten years, and, perhaps, the happiest period, of his life.

The Restoration, as might be imagined, almost instantly drew Mr. Beaumont forth from his retreat; and not only did he take immediate possession of the benefices to which he had been formerly presented by his great patron Bishop Wren, but he was also admitted into the first

list of his majesty's chaplains, and created D.D. by a royal mandamus in 1660.

In the ensuing year, at the particular request of Bishop Wren, who wished to have two persons whom he so highly valued, near him, our author and his lady were induced to remove to Ely, and took possession of the Prebendal house; but unfortunately the situation disagreed so much with Mrs. Beaumont, who was of a delicate constitution, and had a tendency to consumption in her frame, that when in April 1662, on the resignation of Dr. Pearson, master of Jesus' college, Cambridge, the Bishop had appointed Dr. Beaumont his successor, Mrs. Beaumont was become too weak to bear the fatigue of removal, and expired at Ely on the 31st of the following month, leaving a family of six very young children. This severe stroke, whilst it was borne by her sorrowing husband with the resignation of a Christian, was deeply and irreparably felt as a man; for he had lost one who had been his support under every distress, and who had never welcomed prosperity, but as he was a sharer with her in it.

With his little family he now removed to

Cambridge, where on the decease of Dr. Hale, master of Peterhouse, in 1663 he was presented by his kind patron to the headship of that college, a situation which of all others he had most desired, and in which, indeed, he acquired the love and veneration of all within the influence of his authority ; for he lost no opportunity of rewarding merit, especially when labouring under the disadvantages of obscure birth or confined circumstances ; and so revolting, in fact, to his benevolent heart was the spectacle of learning and piety suffering under the pressure of want or cold neglect, that whenever such an instance occurred in the society over which he presided, he immediately hastened to alleviate it, by admitting the person or persons so circumstanced into his family, under the denomination of his sizars, where, until they took their Bachelor's degree, he supplied them not only with the necessaries, but the comforts of life, allowing them free access to his library, and not seldom to the still greater benefits resulting from his conversation and advice.

Preferment still followed the footsteps of our learned divine. In the year of his admission to

the mastership of Peterhouse, he was instituted to the rectory of Feversham, near Cambridge; and in 1664 to that of Barley, in Hertfordshire, where he alternately resided, we are told, in the vacation months every summer, "feeding the indigent, instructing the ignorant, and faithfully discharging all the offices of the pastoral charge."

The ensuing year saw him involved in a controversy with Dr. Henry More, who, having broached some doctrines in his "Mystery of Godliness," which our author deemed not only subversive of our excellent constitution, but injurious to the cause of Christianity, he privately communicated his objections to the Doctor, who thinking proper to reply through the medium of the press, compelled Dr. Beaumont to have recourse to the same public vehicle, and so effectually did he refute the positions of his antagonist, that he received the thanks of the university for his services in behalf of religion.

The reputation, indeed, of Dr. Beaumont, for the depth and soundness of his theological knowledge, had now become so great, that in the year 1670, without any solicitation on his

part, or any competition on that of others, he was called, by the united voice of the university, to fill the divinity chair, and in this very important situation he passed the residue of his life, a period of twenty-nine years, delivering lectures regularly twice a week in every term; in the course of which he went through the two Epistles to the Romans and Colossians, in order to set at rest the numerous heresies and controversies which had arisen from a mistaken interpretation of them.

The success which had attended his efforts in this arduous attempt at Cambridge, led to his appointment in 1689, as one of the commissioners for the comprehension, as it was termed, or the union of churchmen and dissenters under one form of public worship, but not entertaining any expectation that such a plan could be carried into effect, he declined taking his place at the board.

Blessed with an uncommon share of health and strength, he continued to discharge all the duties of his office, even to his eighty-fourth year, with an unbroken spirit; but, relying too much, at length, on the vigour of his constitu-

tion, he exerted himself with such energy in preaching in his turn before the university on the 5th of November 1699, as to bring on, after the service of the day was concluded, symptoms of alarming debility. These ushered in at night a high fever, which being followed in a few days by an attack of the gout in his stomach, he expired on the 23d of the same month.

“ Thus,” says the friendly memorialist of his life, with whose summary of his character I cannot do better than close this brief sketch; “ thus, after a life full of as much virtue and reputation as ever fell to the share of one man, died the great and excellent Professor **BEAUMONT**; regretted by all good men, and the whole university; but most of all by the members of that society over which he had so long, and so worthily presided; who lost in him the guide of their lives, the director of their studies, the witness and encourager of their virtues.

“ He was religious without bigotry, devout without superstition, learned without pedantry, judicious without censoriousness, eloquent without vanity, charitable without ostentation, generous without profusion, friendly without dis-

simulation, courteous without flattery, prudent without cunning, and humble without meanness. In short, whoever shall hereafter deserve the reputation of having filled with credit the several stations which he so eminently adorned, will have reason to believe full justice done to his character, if for learning, piety, judgment, humanity, and good breeding, it may be thought worthy to be compared with that of Dr. BEAUMONT.*

Of the numerous works of Dr. Beaumont, with the exception of his "Observations upon the Apology of Dr. Henry More," none have issued from the press but his *Psyche*, and his *Minor Poems*; an injunction having been found in his will against the publication of his critical and polemical writings.

Psyche, as we have already related, was written during the author's residence at Hadleigh in 1647, and published in 1648, in twenty cantos;

* Highly-coloured as this character of our author may be deemed, it seems to be borne out by the opinion of his contemporaries; for in his epitaph in the antichapel at Peter-house he is styled "Poeta, Orator, Theologus præstantissimus; quovis nomine Hæreticorum Malleus, et Veritatis Vindex."

and a second edition with the poet's last corrections, and augmented by him to twenty-four cantos, appeared in 1702, under the superintendence of his son, the Rev. Charles Beaumont.

This bulky folio, the laudable design of which "is to recommend the practice of piety and morality, by describing the most remarkable passages of our Saviour's life, and by painting particular virtues and vices in their proper colours," has now, notwithstanding the admiration which it once excited, dropped into entire oblivion; a fate which, though the most deplorable that can happen to a poet, cannot, in this instance, I apprehend, when the work is viewed *as a whole*, be pronounced altogether undeserved.

Dr. Beaumont, in fact, brought to his undertaking a large share of learning, and an inexhaustible fund of wit and fancy; but, unhappily, very little either of judgment or of taste to regulate and controul them. The result, therefore, has been, that whilst the former is too often obtrusive and misplaced, the latter is licentious and extravagant to a degree of which there are not many examples even in the records of poetry.

Nor is the general tenor of his language frequently less exceptionable, than the forced imagery and conceits of which it is so often the vehicle; for its quaintness and familiarity are, not seldom, such as to throw upon what was intended to be grave, or awful, or majestic, a truly ludicrous and fantastic air.

With defects such as these, it was totally impossible that a theme so hallowed and sublime as our author had chosen, could be successfully treated; and, in fact, throughout the whole poem, the dignity and simplicity of the scriptural record are, in almost every instance, violated. Yet with this great general failure, there are nevertheless dispersed through the volume many phrases, lines, and short passages of considerable beauty, and which, therefore, are entitled to a rescue from the utter and merited neglect into which the vast body of the poem has fallen.

A work, indeed, so circumstanced as the *Psyche* of Beaumont has been for more than a century, must have furnished to the curious enquirer into scarce and forgotten poetry, many a tempting opportunity for selection and transplantation; and accordingly it is recorded of

Pope, that, on being asked his opinion of *Psyche* in a private conversation, he declared, "*there are in it a great many flowers well worth gathering, and a man who has the art of stealing wisely will find his account in reading it.*"*

It shall be the business, therefore, of the remainder of my present paper, to cull a few of these flowers, reserving a notice of the minor and posthumous poems of our bard to a future number.

The descriptive powers of Dr. Beaumont were certainly great, and, had he known how to have placed the reins on his imagination, and to have selected his objects with a just discrimination as to their adaption to the purposes of poetry, they would undoubtedly have appeared to great advantage. Almost beyond number, indeed, are the pictures which might be drawn from his *Psyche*; but they are, in general, clogged with a multitude of insignificant features, and, consequently, want that boldness, simplicity, and relief, so indicative of a master's hand. Some there are, however, which may

* Minor Poems, Life prefixed, p. xxii.

claim a better character, and amongst these I would place the following description of the Seasons :

That storm blown o'er, the *Spring* march'd forth
array'd
With fragrant green, whose sweet embroidery
In blooms and buds of virgin smiles display'd
A scene of living joys, all echoed by
Ten thousand birds, which, perch'd on every tree,
Tun'd their soft pipes to Nature's harmony.

Summer came next, with her own riches crown'd,
A wreath of flowers upon her goodly head,
Large sheaves of ripen'd gold did her surround,
And all her way with wholesome plenty spread ;
Where, as she went, no tree but reach'd his arm,
(For it was hot) to shade her head from harm.

Then follow'd *Autumn*, with her bosom full
Of every fruit which either tempts the eye
Or charms the taste ; here Wantonness might cull,
And weary grow : here wide-mouth'd Luxury
Might her own boulimy devour with more
Facility, than spend this teeming store.

At last came drooping *Winter* slowly on,
 For frost hung heavy on his heels ; the year
 Languish'd in him, and looked old and wan :
 He quak'd and shiver'd through his triple fur.

Canto iv.

In the same canto, and not far distant from the above passage, occurs a delineation of the Paradise of the Poets, a part of which, including characters of Homer, Pindar, and Theocritus, Virgil, Horace, and Ovid, Tasso and Spenser, I shall present to my readers.

There on the shore a singing troop appear'd,
 Where *Pindar* and his lute their parts did play ;
 All ears were ravished which his numbers heard ;
 And had not *Flaccus* thrown his fear away,
 And fir'd by envious bravery, stretch'd his skill,
 Lyric's sole sovereign *Pindar* had been still.

High on deserved mountain *Homer* sate,
 And sham'd a trumpet by his stouter laies ;
 Which Fame, who thither flutter'd, having got,
 Spread through the wondering world their only
 praise :

Till princely *Maro* with an equal strain
 Embrac'd his voice, and echoed them again.

Those at the second bound reflected in
 By *Tasso's* Muse, but in a purer tone :
 The Muse which taught her sister *Ymagis*
 The Greek and Roman poetry to praise.
 And rescu'd *Godfrey* from *Chirvan's* hands,
 As he had *Salem* freed from *Pagan* hands.*

Not far from whom, though in a lower clime
 Yet with a goodly train doth *Celia* sweep :
 Though manacled in thick and peevish fetters,
 A decent pace his painful verse doth sweep :
 Right fairly drest were his well-bequith'd *Queen*,
 Did not her mask too much her features veil.

* We have another eulogy on *Godfrey* and *Tasso's* expression with great energy and poetical spirit, in the following stanza of the seventeenth *century*.

Right *Christiana Hero*, O how due to Thee
 Was sacred *Salem's* crown, and more than due
 How justly wears thy pious victory
 Both martial and poetic laurel's dress ;
 Whilst thy illustrious name and glory reigns
 Both in the world's applause, and *Tasso's* strains !

Those strains in which thy brighten'd *valour* shines
 Not *Salem* only, but *Eternity* ;
 In which with louder life thy trumpet speaks,
 Because blown by a *Muse* whose blast can fly
 Beyond *Judea's* bounds, and nobly dares
 Alarm the admiration of all ears.

Some distance thence, in flow'r'y wanton groves
 Luxurious Amorosos sate, who by
 The thrilling key of sports, and smiles, and loves,
 Effeminated their quaint melody.

Nimble *Theocritus* and *Naso* were
 The leading lords of all that revell'd there.

The close of all was an affected throng
 Which chirp'd, pip'd, crackled, squeak'd, and buzz'd
 about ;

Mushrooms of Verse : who yet as boldly sung
 As *Homer's* self, and desperately thought
 Their *Sonnets' crack* a noise as gallant made
 As did the *thunder* of an *Iliad*.

It is impossible to pass by this group of poets without remarking that justice is by no means done to the character of *Spenser*, whose admirable versification is grossly misrepresented by the epithets, *painful*, *thick*, and *peevisish*. Nor is *Theocritus* under any point of view properly associated with *Ovid* ; the former being justly valued for his simplicity, and adherence to nature, whilst the latter is too often florid, verbose, and artificial. In every other respect the passage has considerable merit.

There is occasionally a luxury and splendour of description in this long and elaborate poem which appears to have been struck out, as it were, at a heat, by the fortuitous collision of some rare and ethereal particles: and of this class the picture I am about to give of a tyrannical and ambitious monarch, will, I have no doubt, be esteemed an adequate example.

There sat the "*Conqueror*;" one whole diamond
made

His radiant helmet; and in wanton pride
A gorgeous flood of plumes about it play'd,
Yet scorn'd the kiss of any wind; aside
They wav'd their heads and coyly seem'd to say,
To every blast, your breath offends; away.

A stately mantle's large expansion reach'd
Down from his wide-spread shoulders to his feet,
And cloth'd him with all splendors that are fetch'd
From eastern shores the western pearls to meet:

His sword look'd lightning through its crystal
sheath,
Whose round hilt crowned its victorious blade;
His mighty sceptre, circled with a wreath
Of bloody bays, right dreadfully he sway'd.

Before him, on a golden pillar, at
 Whose massy foot a palm and laurel grew,
 Upon the back of *Triumph*, *Glory* sate ;
 From whose full robes more dazzling lustre flew
 Than breaks from *Phæbus'* furniture, when he
 Through *Cancer* rides in *June's* high gallantry.

A few lines subsequent to this brilliant passage, occurs a stanza which, from the moral and political truth it conveys, deserves to be written in letters of gold ; and I am happy to add, that both the versification and the expression are such as to do justice to the subject.

When did a realm of slaves unto their Prince
 The trusty sweetness of Love's homage pay ?
 When did a Tyrant with safe confidence
 Rely upon his vassals ? None but they
 Can fairly rule, and fairly ruled be,
 Whom freedom's bonds tie up in Monarchy.

Canto v.

In canto the sixth, the poet, as introductory to a description of the deep sleep which fell upon Adam previous to the creation of Eve, places before us the Cave of Sleep, to which

power he feigns Pity had been sent by the Deity to command her immediate influence over the faculties of our first parent. A part of this allegorical painting, as possessed of no inconsiderable richness of imagination, I shall now offer to my readers. Pity is represented as "starting through the earth,"

Down to the silent mouth of that dark cave
Where sorrows find their sink, and cares their
grave.

A lazy moat the grot encompassed
With waters which were never known to stir ;
Upon whose bank secure Oblivion's bed
Was made of sluggish moss and caked fur ;
Bats, owls, and other purblind birds of night
Stole through the swarthy shades their doubtful
flight.

Mandrakes within the moat, and poppy grew,
Which nodded to their neighb'ring plump of trees :
Those were the willow, cypress, box, and yew ;
Close at whose feet lay *Quietness* and *Ease* ;
Whilst from the water crept an heavy cloud
Of dusky vapours.

Through these pass'd Pity to a door of jet,
 Whose wary ringle round was cloth'd in wool ;
 The porter *Silence* —

There found she on a bed of ebony
Sleep laid at length, in soft security :
 Close by her couch's side dropp'd pipes of lead,
 A swarm of bees were humming at her head.

In the sleep which entrances Adam, the poet supposes him to enjoy a dream emblematic of what is about to take place ; and, as a portion of the stanzas appropriated to this delineation, exhibits a fair specimen of the harmony of versification to be *occasionally* found in *Psyche*, I feel it as a debt due to the author, to attract attention towards its structure. No sooner then had Adam sunk beneath the kindly influence,

When lo, a goodly tree salutes his eye,
 Tall, wide, and full of florid majesty.

The woods look'd all that way, and bow'd their
 head ;

Low crept the shrubs and due obeisance made ;
 The plants and flowers their fragrant duties did,
 Ambitious to be gilded by his shade :

Thus happy he in glory's zenith reigns,
King of the hills, the vales, the woods, the plains.

But from his own brave stock, out at his side,
A twig sprung up which grew as fair as he :
As high it reach'd its head, its arms as wide,
And flourished with equal gallantry :
Their leaves all kiss'd, their arms embrac'd each
other,
They liv'd, and lov'd, and joy'd, and reign'd to-
gether.

At the close of Canto the sixth occurs a passage to which it is possible Milton may have been indebted ; for we are told by the Editor of the second edition of *Psyche*, that the principal difference between the impression of 1648 and that of 1702, consists in the supply of a new Canto, the sixteenth, and in three of the former Cantos being each divided into two parts. Milton, we know, was deeply read in the works of his predecessors, and there are certainly several lines and phrases scattered through the pages of *Psyche* which remind us of something similar in the *Paradise Lost*. The passage before us, however, is by far the most striking and direct ;

the bard of *Psyche* is describing the temptation of *Eve*, at the close of which he tells us,

She the *Apple* took,
When lo, with paroxysms of strange dismay
Th' amazed Heavens stood still, Earth's basis shook,
The troubled Ocean roar'd, the startled Air
In hollow groans profoundly breath'd its fear.

If these lines be, as I presume they are, in the first edition of *Psyche*, they must inevitably have attracted the notice and the admiration of our great poet, who has availed himself of them, when recording the first fatal trespass, in a manner corresponding with the characteristic sublimity of his genius.

She pluck'd, she eat !
Earth felt the wound ; and Nature from her seat
Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe,
That all was lost.

And again, when *Adam* yields to the temptation of his wife :

Earth trembled from her entrails, as again
In pangs ; and Nature gave a second groan :

Sky lour'd; and, muttering thunder, some sad drops
 Wept at completing of the mortal sin
 Original.

In the seventh Canto of *Psyche*, which commences the history of our Saviour's life, the adoration of the three kings or magi forms a prominent part; and the address of these personages to the infant Jesus, is drawn up by our author with a propriety, energy, and simplicity, which, had they been found more frequently interspersed through his pages, would have rendered the subject of my criticism an invaluable acquisition.

Having thrice prostrated themselves at the feet of Jesus, the elder of the magi, ere he offers his oblations, exclaims, in behalf of himself and his brethren,

The foolish world surnames us *wise*; but we
 No more will that ambitious title own;
 Which truly due, and suiting none but Thee,
 Before thy footstool here we throw it down:
 The name of *King* has flatter'd us a while,
 But we resign to Thee that fitter stile.

That *King* art Thou ; the hopes of whose dear birth
 Have many fainting generations cheer'd :
 That *Jacob's Star* whose rising here on earth
 The shades and types of prophecies hath clear'd ;
 Displaying to this grovelling world, which lay
 Till now in darkness, a meridian day.

That sovereign *Wisdom*, which contriv'dst at first
 The fabric of this universal *Ball* :
 By thy direction it from *Nothing* burst ;
 And in thy counsels boundless circle all
 Motions of heaven and earth still acted be :
 Both *Change* and *Chance* are *Certainties* to Thee.

We have already had a beautiful description of the Cave of Sleep, and in the following stanzas, at the commencement of the eighth Canto, our author enumerates in a highly pleasing and poetical manner, the peculiar gratifications which flow to man from this gentlest of the blessings of his being, provided all be at peace within his breast. Addressing Nature, he says,

When *Man* has travell'd with his hand, or mind,
 For this both toils and sweats, as well as that,
 Thou in a tender misty vail dost bind
 His heavy head, and teach his eyes to shut

Out grief and pain, that, so reposed, he
May hugg'd in *Sleep's* all-downy bosom be.

Yet other creatures little find in *sleep*
But that dull pleasure of a gloomy rest,
Which they themselves perceive not when they reap :
Man by this fuller privilege is blest,
That *sleep* itself can be awake to him,
And entertain him with some courteous dream.

In this soft calm, when all alone the heart
Walks through the shades of its own silent breast,
Heaven takes delight to meet it, and impart
Those blessed visions which surpass the best
Of waking eyes. —

And he then very truly adds, in reference to
the moral state of the mind,

The sweetest sleep is possible upon
A cold and churlish couch of board or stone.

'Tis not the flatt'ry of fine things without,
Which can with genuine softness clothe thy rest ;
Down proves but precious thorns, and silk doth flout
His hopes of quiet sleep, whose treacherous breast,
Though with external unguents sleek, within
Is harsh and rugged, being lined with sin.

The honest ploughman in the simple straw
Which furnish'd his first board, and now his bed,
Reaps solid savoury rest, and steeps his brow
In deepest ease : whilst though the tyrant's head
Be laid in delicacy's softest lap,
By gnawing fears and cares 'tis ploughed up.

The canto from which the above extract is taken, contains a long detail of the fears and the cruelties of Herod, when he finds that the Wise Men have deceived him, and return no more. The apprehensions of the tyrant are painted in very strong and bold colours, and the following passage in particular, and more especially the concluding stanza, may be pronounced worthy of preservation, as well for the vigour and beauty of the language, as for the strength and propriety of the imagery.

Dark dreadful fancies, and self-thwarting cares
Worried his breast, and chased sleep from his eyes :
For up he starts, his grisly beard he tears,
And round about his chamber cursing flies :
He cursed himself, and heaven, and all its stars,
But chiefly that which pointed out his fears.

And he then exclaims, in an agony of baffled
cunning and malice,

See, now! how well thy credulous courtesy
Repayed is; those kings the news have spread
Through all the regions of wide Araby;
Which join'd in zeal's bold league, have made an
head
To tear "thee from" thy throne:

Methinks I smell the battle drawing near,
And *vengeance* aiming at my careless brain;
Methinks the thunder of their arms I hear,
And see the lightning flashing on the plain;
Loud in mine ears, methinks, the name doth ring,
The shouted name, of *Israel's new-born King*.

The reception, also, which the soul of Herod
meets on approaching the regions of everlasting
punishment, is conceived in the boldest spirit of
sacred poesy:

Lo, at his coming, lo, th' infernal pit
Was moved; where every damned prince arose
From his sulphureous throne of pangs, and met
This more deserving tyrant.

The *love of life*, and *dread of death*, so strongly impressed on the heart of man, have been a frequent theme both for the philosopher and the poet; yet, powerfully and repeatedly as the workings of this instinct have been described, there are not many pictures on the subject which, for strength and distinctness of colouring, can surpass what I have now to produce from Psyche. I must confess, however, that the stanzas are selected from a considerable number on the same topic of a very inferior cast.

The buried *captive*, whose dark dungeon is
His antedated and his sadder grave,
Though banish'd thus from vital happiness,
Yet hugs his *life* as dearly, as the brave
And free'st gallant who his lust can please
With all the fat of pleasure and of ease.

The *leper*, clothed in his winding sheet
By his disease, abhors the thought of *death*;
Life still is ev'n in his dead body sweet;
And full as precious he reposes his breath
As lovely virgins, whose fair feature's dress
Of native roses, and of lilies is.

The lamentable *galley-slave*, who fast
Is chained to perpetual misery,
Still toils and rows against the tempest's blast
Without all hopes that any port can be
His hav'n of rest; yet holds that *life* full dear
Which only makes his bondage persevere.

Thus all the gall that sharpest misery
Into the heart of *mortal life* can pour,
Meets there such resolute powers of suavity
As conquers all its bitterness.

Tear what you will from man besides, and he
Will stoutly set his shoulders to sustain
The loss; but if his *life* attacked be,
In vain all comforts fawn on him; in vain
Are crowns and sceptres proffer'd him, a price
Too poor to hire him to his *obsequies*.

Canto xiv.

From among the almost innumerable lessons of wisdom and morality which are profusely scattered through this long and elaborate poem, I wish to cull forth one which shall afford the reader a specimen of the energy and simplicity both of thought and diction which occasionally, though I am grieved to say but rarely, add force

and interest to the intrinsic value of the precept. The author is expatiating on the inestimable advantages of *discipline* and *industry*, and after instancing some of their noblest results, he exclaims,

How lovely shine these bright examples which,
 Invite our study into honour's way !
 What tongue would grudge in its sublimest pitch
 Of strained art, to consecrate a lay
 Of praise to them ? and why should we admire
 What yet we dare not venture to desire ?

Ease, ease alone's the rust of that brave metal
 Which strengthens noble spirits for virtue's battel.

No pains so painful are to those who know
 Their soul's activity, as *lazy rest* :
 And on my foes, might I free curses throw,
 My worst should be, what Drones esteem the best :
 No imprecations would I shoot, but this ;
 And damn them to no Hell but *Idleness*.

Canto xx.

It is seldom that our poet, when he has occasion to introduce the agency of Satan, which, from the nature of his subject, he is often ob-

liged to do, can escape exhibiting the ludicrous or the horribly grotesque. But in the following lines, which describe the flight of that Evil Spirit from Heaven, into which he had momentarily intruded himself under the guise of an Angel of Light, there is a portion of Miltonic force and grandeur.

As down through Heaven he rush'd, he proudly
threw

Scorn on the stars which he could not possess ;
Then through the air imperiously he flew,
And by his looks proclaim'd that realm was his.

His swarthy wings lash'd that soft element
With violent speed, and made it roar aloud ;
No wind did ever with such furious bent
Or hideous noise, through those mild regions croud ;
No bolt of thunder ever rent its path
With such precipitant tumultuous wrath.

Canto xxii.

Further on in the same canto we meet with a very striking description of the martyrdom of *Uranius*, the guardian and companion of *Psyche*, in composing which there can be little doubt

but that our author must have had in his recollection the fate of Rowland Taylor, who, whilst Rector of Hadleigh, in the reign of Queen Mary, perished at the stake, within half a mile of the spot where the poet was writing, a martyr in the cause of protestantism. The lines will apply with the happiest truth and precision to this memorable instance of triumphant faith and piety.

Then with a brand
The pile they kindle, and blow up the flame.

But mild *Uranius* having kiss'd the stake,
And every faggot which his lips could reach,
At leisure was his noble prayers to make
For pardon for his murderers' fury, which
Blinded with superstition's veil, alas !
Perceived not what part it acting was.

Then purer than the flame, and brighter far,
Which mounted from his pile, his *soul* did fly ;
It higher flew than that, and gain'd the sphere
Not of the *stars*, but of *felicity* ;
Where it was welcomed to its final home
By Martyrdom's illustrious diadem.

Go, valiant *Saint*, thy conquest is complete ;
Go where immortal laurel ready is
With endless honor thy bright brows to meet ;
Go, and possess thy *Master's* realm of bliss :
 Thy name and fame shall reverend be beneath
 So long as *Piety* on earth shall breathe.

To these longer passages I shall now beg leave to attach a few single stanzas of great beauty, and which are, indeed, an almost sufficient reward for the toil of wading through the folio in which they have been locked up. What, for instance, can be more just and impressive than the following picture of piety ?

O how imperious is *Meek Piety*,
Whether it will or no, commanding all
Spectators into love and reverence ! He
Who at true honor reacheth, must let fall
 His other plumes, and wisely learn to dress
 Body and soul in humble holiness.

Canto x.

And, again, it is said of *Psyche*, in a strain alike exquisite for the nobleness of the sentiment and the poetry of the diction,

Abroad, she counted but her prison ; *Home*,
Home was the region of her liberty.

Abroad diversion throng'd, and left no room
 For zeal's set task, and virtue's business free :

Home was her less incumber'd scene, though
 there

Angels and *God* she knew spectators were.

Canto xviii.

But, perhaps, there is not a passage in the volume which for splendor of language and brilliancy of versification, can vie with the subsequent four lines. The poet is representing the guard of soldiers trembling with terror at the miraculous circumstances which take place at the sepulchre of Jesus on the morning of his resurrection, amongst which, as the most appalling to them, he particularly notices the appearance of the angelic visitor :

But chiefly at the *Angel's presence* they
 Were overwhelmed in a flood of fright ;
 His robes were glorious as the morning's ray,
 And partners with the driven snow in white. *

Canto xv.

* As a striking proof of the strange want of taste, and ludicrous familiarity of language which are to be found not only

It is altogether needless to point out to my readers the perfect beauty of the third and fourth lines of this quotation, for they are not to be exceeded by the most polished specimens of modern versification.

Instances of this kind, indeed, surrounded as they usually are in the volume before us by a mass of very inferior materials, strike the eye like a flash of lightning amidst midnight darkness, and excite, perhaps, from the power of contrast, a higher degree of admiration than, in any other situation, they would probably produce. Yet I think it will be allowed that the sublimity of the stanza I am now about to produce, can require no relief from this or any other source, to effect a very powerful impression on

in every canto, but in every page of this long poem, I shall subjoin, in this note, the couplet which immediately follows the fine passage in my text, and which closes, indeed, the stanza.

For 'twas his *Easter suit*, the suit he had
To honour this *bright feast* on purpose made.

Nothing more than this instance can be required to show what sifting and selection are necessary in quoting from the *Psyche* of Dr. Beaumont.

the mind, and with it I shall conclude this series of extracts.

*God, God alone is King of Nature ; and
His Voice the fountain was whence first she sprung,
And ever since hath been the rule whereby
She steers her loyal course. That Voice which rung
So loud as to awake Vacuity
Into a full and mighty world.*

Canto x.

I have now brought forward what will, I think, fully establish the assertion of Pope, that there are in the Psyche of Dr. Beaumont "a great many flowers well worth gathering." I have sought far and near, indeed, for these flowers, and amidst a wilderness of strange and monstrous growth ; but they are such, if I do not deceive myself, as will, for beauty and rarity, amply compensate the trouble which attended the research. That there are others which might be collected by going over the same ground, I will not attempt to deny ; but I may venture to affirm, from a rapid glance whilst passing, that, in freshness and distinctness of

colouring, they will be found far inferior to those which form the present *bouquet*.

Dropping the metaphor, however, I shall now place before my readers, with the view of exhibiting the variety which has been aimed at in selecting them, a table of the arrangement and the titles of the specimens which have been produced. They will be found to have been given in the following order :— 1. The Seasons. 2. The Paradise of the Poets. 3. The Tyrant. 4. The Free Monarchy. 5. The Cave of Sleep. 6. Adam's Dream. 7. The Transgression of Eve. 8. The Adoration of the Magi. 9. The Blessings of Sleep. 10. Herod in Fear, and in Hades. 11. The Love of Life. 12. The Praise of Industry. 13. The Flight of Satan. 14. The Martyrdom. 15. Piety. 16. Domestic Virtue. 17. The Angel at the Tomb of Jesus. 18. The Voice of God.

The catalogue, short as it is, will sufficiently prove that Dr. Beaumont possessed a vigorous and a plastic imagination; and were we to form an estimate of his powers from these insulated extracts, he might be considered as entitled to take a high rank among the poets of his country.

How greatly is it to be lamented, then, that when the volume whence these passages have been drawn is once opened, the allotment must vanish like a dream, and we are compelled to behold in almost every page the most revolting violations of simplicity and taste ! I have endeavoured, however, as far as may lie in my power, that all shall not perish through want of discrimination ; and when I shall have added in another number, a few gems from the minor poems, I trust I shall be deemed to have done some little service to the poetical memory of this almost forgotten bard of Hadleigh.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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New-Street-Square.

NOONTIDE LEISURE ;

OR,

SKETCHES IN SUMMER,

OUTLINES FROM NATURE AND IMAGINATION,

AND INCLUDING

A Tale of the Days of Shakspeare.

BY

NATHAN DRAKE, M.D.

AUTHOR OF LITERARY HOURS,
OF ESSAYS ON PERIODICAL LITERATURE, OF SHAKSPEARE
AND HIS TIMES, OF WINTER NIGHTS, AND
EVENINGS IN AUTUMN.

Come, sweetest SUMMER !
And o'er old AVON's magic edge,
Whence SHAKSPEARE cull'd the spiky sedge,
All playful yet, in years unripe,
To frame a shrill and simple pipe,
O Goddess, guide my pilgrim feet !

WARTON.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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NOONTIDE LEISURE.

No. X.

On yonder verdant hillock laid,
Where oaks and elms, a friendly shade,
O'erlook the falling stream,
O master of the Latin lyre,
Awhile with thee will I retire,
From summer's noontide beam.

AKENSIDE.

GAY and convivial as is the character of a large portion of the poetry of Horace, there is frequently intermingled with it, even in its lightest mood, something which tends to check the triumph of the mere sensualist, something which brings vividly before him the uncertain tenure of human life, and the consequent futility of all his enjoyments. It is to this feature in the

compositions of the Roman bard, a feature not yet sufficiently noticed, and which may be said, even whilst the shouts of revelry and mirth are loudest in our ears, to point as it were to death dimly hovering in the back ground, that we are indebted for some of his most pleasing and instructive passages, — passages which reach the heart, and breathe over the mind a spirit of sweet and philosophic melancholy.

It is true that, conforming in some measure to the practice of his contemporaries, who were sometimes wont, on occasions of high festivity, to place a skeleton on the table, as an incentive to hard drinking, he has now and then introduced imagery of this mournful kind with the view of recommending the enjoyment of the present hour, yet has he ever done it in terms which clearly indicate that he was no disciple of Epicurus in the gross sense in which the tenets of that philosopher have been generally, but incorrectly, understood. For, when he tells us, in the ninth ode of his first book,

— *Quid sit futurum cràs fuge quærere; et
Quem sors dierum cunq̄ue dabit, lucro*

Appone : nec dulces amores
 Sperne puer, neque tu choreas : —
 Permitte Divis cætera.

Seek not to know the bliss or pain
 That from to-morrow takes its birth ;
 But count each day a present gain ;
 Enjoy sweet love and festal mirth : —
 Trust to the gods the rest.

BOSCAWEN.

and, in the close of the eleventh, recommending similar forbearance, when he adds,

—— Sapias, vina liques, et spatio brevi
 Spem longam reseces : dum loquimur, fugerit invida
 Ætas : carpe diem, quàm minimùm credula : pos-
 tero.

Pour the rich wine, in gay enjoyment wise,
 Contract the hopes of life's contracted date :
 Even whilst we speak the winged moment flies ;
 Snatch present bliss, and leave the rest to fate.

BOSCAWEN.

he does but inculcate what may be taught with-
 out any impeachment either of reason or virtue ;

that, dismissing all unavailing anxiety for the future, we should enjoy the present hour *cheerfully, socially, and TEMPERATELY*; doctrine which, whilst it was evidently never designed by the poet to be interpreted according to the grovelling import of those who call out "to eat and drink, for to-morrow we die," comes recommended to us from the highest of all authorities, by which we are told "*to cast all our care upon God,*" "*to take no anxious thought for the morrow,*" and that "*sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.*"

A great part, however, of the sentiment and imagery to which we allude, has been introduced by Horace, not merely as incitements to pleasure, from a consideration of the shortness and uncertainty of human life, but as correctives also of that imbecility and dissipation of mind which are but too apt to spring from a long and uninterrupted possession of wealth and luxurious indulgence. It is thus that in his address to his friend Dellius, who appears to have been dissolute in his habits, and deficient at the same time in fortitude and steadiness of purpose, he places before him, as a motive to energy and

consistency of character, and to a temperate enjoyment of the luxuries of opulence, the certainty that, notwithstanding all his cares and apprehensions, and consequent vacillation of conduct, neither these, nor the accumulation of riches, nor the orgies of voluptuousness, will protract the stroke of fate:—

Æquam memento rebus in arduis
 Servare mentem ; non secus in bonis
 Ab insolenti temperatam
 Lætitia, moriture Delli,
 Seu mæstus omni tempore vixeris,
 Seu te in remoto gramine per dies
 Festos reclinatum bearis
 Interiore notâ Falerni ;
 Quo pinus ingens albaque populus
 Umbram hospitem consociare amant
 Ramis, et obliquo laborat
 Lympha fugax trepidare vivo : —
 Cedes coëmptis saltibus, et domo,
 Villaque, flavus quam Tiberis lavit :
 Cedes ; et extractis in altum
 Divitiis potietur hæres.
 Divesne prisco natus ab Inacho,
 Nil interest.

Lib. ii. Od. 8.

With stedfast soul thy course maintain,
 Should griefs assail thee, toils oppress ;
 Nor less from boundless joy refrain,
 Should pleasure smile, and fortune bless.

For, Dellius, death's sure lot is thine,
 Though grief embitter every hour,
 Though richest, best Falernian wine
 Court thee within the mossy bower,

Where the tall pine in stately rows,
 With poplars, forms a friendly shade,
 Where the swift stream obliquely flows,
 And, quivering, murmurs through the glade.—

Soon must thou quit thy dear-bought wood,
 Thy treasures pil'd with ceaseless care,
 Thy villa wash'd by Tiber's flood,
 Thy stately mansion, to thine heir.

Though great thy wealth, renowned thy birth,
 Nor birth nor opulence can save.

BOSCAWEN.

Again, also, in the opening of the third book, with the view of enforcing the blessings of contentment, and whilst expatiating on the futility of honour, wealth, and fame, even when ob-

tained without any sacrifice of integrity or subserviency to the follies of the great, he introduces the same awful and awakening imagery, pointing to the grave as hastening with equal if not more rapid strides, to entomb the rich as well as the poor, the lofty as well as the meek.

Est ut viro vir latius ordinet
 Arbusta sulcis ; hic generosior
 Descendat in campum petitor ;
 Moribus hic, meliorque famâ
 Contendat ; illi turba clientium
 Sit major ; æquâ lege necessitas
 Sortitur insignes et imos :
 Omne capax movet urna nomen.

Lib. iii. Od. 1.

Some spread plantations o'er the earth,
 In wider range : some build their claim
 To public honours on illustrious birth ;
 Some on the juster ground of well-earn'd fame.

On some a crowd of clients wait ;
 Yet, ah ! stern fate, with equal doom,
 Shakes in its ample urn the poor, the great,
 Destin'd alike to fill the silent tomb.

BOSCAWEN.

But if it be necessary to awaken the unthinking from their dreams of pleasure, of ambition, and long life, by recalling to their heated imaginations how fragile and illusory are their views and hopes, and how soon to be terminated by the extinction of their being in this world, it is yet more essential that those who, void of all moral restraint, rush into the arms of vice to gratify their lusts, and add injustice, avarice, and oppression, to the caprices of folly and the pursuits of dissipation, should be reminded, if possible, in still stronger terms, of the inevitable hour which is hurrying forward to arrest their career. And this our poet has admirably done in numerous instances, and in none with more effect than in the following lines, where he presents us with a striking and pathetic sketch of the miseries resulting from the cupidity of the wealthy and unprincipled patrician.

Quid, quòd usque proximos
Revellis agri terminos, et ultra
Limites clientium
Salis avarus? pellitur paternos
In sinu ferens Deos
Et uxor et vir, sordidosque natos.

Nulla certior tamen
Rapacis Orci sede destinata
Aula divitem manet
Herum.

Lib. ii. Od. 18.

What, though thy avarice burst each bound,
Oppress the poor, the weak, compell'd to yield,
O'erthrow the land-mark, leap the mound,
And drive the peasant from his only field,
Whilst the sad pair to exile go,
Forced by stern power to seek some new abodes,
And clasp, in deep despairing woe,
Their infant race, their lov'd paternal gods ;
Yet, at the dread appointed hour,
Rapacious death spreads wide his palace gate,
And grasps thee by his fatal power,
To none more certain than the wealthy great.

BOSCAWEN.

It is scarcely possible to read this representation of the despair of the exiled peasants, without being reminded of the yet more beautiful and affecting delineation of Goldsmith, who, whilst describing in his *Deserted Village* its helpless peasantry driven from their homes by the monopolizing spirit of the rich and rapacious

cious, appears to have had this passage of the Roman lyrist immediately before him. He has adopted, however, a much wider canvass, and having brought his groups more minutely and distinctly on the fore-ground, the picture has, in consequence, become one of the most touching and interesting in the compass of modern poetry. We shall bring it forward here as an exquisite enlargement and illustration of the Horatian miniature.

Good Heav'n! what sorrows gloom'd that parting
day,

That called them from their native walks away ;
When the poor exiles, every pleasure past,
Hung round the bow'rs, and fondly look'd their
last,

And took a long farewell, and wish'd in vain
For seats like these beyond the Western main ;
And, shuddering still to face the distant deep,
Return'd and wept, and still returned to weep.
The good old sire the first prepar'd to go
To new-found worlds, and wept for other's woe ;
But for himself, in conscious virtue brave,
He only wish'd for worlds beyond the grave.

His lovely daughter, lovelier in her tears,
The fond companion of his helpless years,
Silent went next, neglectful of her charms,
And left a lover's for a father's arms.
With louder plaints the mother spoke her woes,
And bless'd the cot where every pleasure rose;
And kiss'd her thoughtless babes with many a tear,
And clasp'd them close, in sorrow doubly dear;
Whilst her fond husband strove to lend relief
In all the silent manliness of grief.

O luxury! thou curs'd by heaven's decree,
How ill exchang'd are things like these for thee!

Reverting, however, to the more immediate subject of our paper, it may be remarked that Horace has not merely contented himself with the introduction of reflections on the proximity of death, and the short-lived tenure of sensual delights, as powerful correctives of luxury, dissipation, and vice; but he has taken a melancholy pleasure also in contrasting the innocent gratifications of life with imagery of this mournful and pathetic cast, fully aware how greatly our interest in these scenes is augmented by such a striking demonstration of the transitory

nature of all human enjoyment, even when most rational and pure.

It is in this spirit of subdued light and shade, of gently agitating the soul by opposed but not violent emotions, that many of the sweetest compositions of the Sabine bard have been conceived and finished, in colours, perhaps, less deep and contrasted than some of the pictures we have just been contemplating, but productive of a yet more tender and interesting impression. Let us select, for example, the following passage from his ode to Posthumus :

Eheu, fugaces, Posthume, Posthume,
 Labuntur anni : nec pietas moram
 Rugis et instanti senectæ
 Afferet, indomitæque morti : —
 Linquenda tellus, et domus, et placens
 Uxor : neque harum, quas colis, arborum
 Te, præter invisas cupressos,
 Ulla brevem dominum sequetur.

Lib. ii. Od. 14.

Ah, Posthumus, how flits away
 On rapid wings the transient hour !
 No pious offerings can delay
 Stern age, or death's all conquering power. —

Thy lands, thy dome, thy pleasing wife,
These must thou quit ; 'tis nature's doom :
No tree, whose culture charms thy life,
Save the sad cypress, waits thy tomb.

BOSCAWEN.

The effect thus produced by recalling the urn or the tomb with all their endearing associations amid scenes of rural happiness and domestic felicity, has been copied by a few master-minds thoroughly imbued with a taste for the genius of ancient poetry ; and among these none has more happily caught and embodied the very spirit of the style we have been commenting upon, than the justly celebrated painter Poussin, who, in one of the most beautiful of his landscapes, well known under the appellation of the *Arcadia*, has brought forward to the eye an incident whose influence over the mind and heart is precisely such as Horace has so often delighted to call forth. It would be injustice perhaps to the subject to omit in this place a description of this picture and its effects, or to give it in any other language than that of the eloquent Abbé Du Bos. “ Le tableau dont je parle,” he remarks, “ représente le paysage d’une contrée

riante. Au milieu l'on voit le monument d'une jeune fille morte à la fleur de son âge : c'est ce qu'on connoît par la statue de cette fille couchée sur le tombeau, à la maniere des anciens. L'inscription sépulcrale n'est que de quatre mots Latins : Je vivois cependant en Arcadie, *Et in Arcadia ego*. Mais cette inscription si courte fait faire les plus sérieuses réflexions à deux jeunes garçons et à deux jeunes filles parées de guirlandes de fleurs, et qui paroissent avoir rencontré ce monument si triste en des lieux où l'on devine bien qu'ils ne cherchoient pas un objet affligeant. Un d'entre eux fait remarquer aux autres cette inscription en la montrant du doigt, et l'on ne voit plus sur leurs visages, à travers l'affliction qui s'en empare, que les restes d'une joie expirante. On s'imagine entendre les réflexions de ces jeunes personnes sur la mort qui n'épargne ni l'âge, ni la beauté, et contre laquelle les plus heureux climats n'ont point d'azile. On se figure ce qu'elles vent se dire de touchant, lorsqu'elles seront revenues de la première surprise, et l'on l'applique à soi-même et à ceux à qui l'on s'intéresse." *

* *Réflexions Critiques sur La Poesie et sur La Peinture.* Sixième Edition. Première Partie, p. 55.

That Horace, together with all, even the wisest and the best among the ancient world, must, from their condition of doubt and scepticism as to any future state of existence, have viewed the shortness and uncertainty of human life with a gloom, from which believers in a resurrection from the dead are happily exempt, is a circumstance which cannot fail to have rendered, in the eyes of his contemporaries at least, the lights and shadows in the description which has just been selected from his works, still more conflicting and impressive; and, indeed, the expression of his feelings on this melancholy view of the destiny of human nature, as it appeared to by far the greater part of the heathen world, has furnished him with another series of similarly contrasted pictures, fully equal perhaps to the former in their power of awakening some of the most awful and touching contemplations which can agitate the breast of man. Of these, as still further elucidating the express subject of this paper, and consequently affording a more ample display of the pensively moral turn of thought so peculiarly frequent in our poet, one or two instances, out of many that

might be produced, shall be given. It is thus that, in a strain of imagery which parallels the plaintive and well-known lines of Moschus, he laments the utter extinction of human being, and contrasts it with the resuscitation of the vegetable world.

Diffugere nives ; redeunt jam gramina campis,
 Arboribusque comæ :
 Mutat terra vices ; et decrescentia ripas
 Flumina prætereunt :
 Gratia cum Nymphis geminisque sororibus audet
 Ducere nuda choros.
 Immortalia ne speres, monet annus, et alium
 Quæ rapit hora diem.
 Frigora mitescunt Zephyris : ver proterit æstas,
 Interitura, simul
 Pomifer autumnus fruges effuderit : et mox
 Bruma recurrit iners.
 Damna tamen celeres reparant cœlestia lunæ :
 Nos ubi decidimus
 Quòd pius Æneas, quo Tullus dives, et Ancus,
 Pulvis et umbra sumus.

Lib. iv. Od. 7.

Lo! from the hills recede the wintry snows ;
 Soft herbage springs, the grove resumes its
 pride :
 Earth feels the change ; the lessening river flows
 Within its banks, an unambitious tide.

The graceful nymphs, unawed by conscious fear,
 In native beauty lead the festal choir.
 But thou, frail man, observe the changeful year,
 Nor dare to immortality aspire.

To genial gales the icy chillness yields :
 Now spring retires ; now summer quits the
 plain ;
 Now fruitful autumn clothes the plenteous fields ;
 And now stern winter re-asserts her reign.

Each fading wane th' increasing moons supply,
 But man, unhappy man, when once convey'd
 Where even our great, our pious fathers lie,
 Returns to dust, and flits an empty shade.

BOSCAWEN.

A precisely similar vein of pensive reflection runs through the fourth ode of the first book, and may be found, indeed, scattered, though in a less full and developed manner, through

many parts of his Lyric compositions. But it is, perhaps, when employed in the mournful duty of weeping over the grave of superior intellect and genius, that our poet has deplored most feelingly the impenetrable gloom which shrouded from the eye of the Pagan philosopher any certain or consolatory prospect of a future life. How beautiful and affecting, for instance, is the opening of his monody on the death of Archytas :

Te maris et terræ, numeroque carentis arenæ
Mensorem cohibent, Archyta,
Pulveris exigui prope littus parva Matinum
Munera : nec quidquam tibi prodest
Aërias tentasse domos, animoque rotundum
Percurrisse polum, morituro.
Occidit et Pelopis genitor conviva Deorum,
Tithonusque remotus in auras,
Et Jovis arcanis Minos admissus : habentque
Tartara Panthoiden, iterum orco
Demissum ; quamvis, clypeo Trojana refixo
Tempora testatus, nihil ultra
Nervos atque cutem morti concesserat atræ ;
Judice te, non sordidus auctor
Naturæ verique.

Lib. i. Od. 28.

Thee, whose great mind could scan earth's wide
domains,

Trace the vast deep, the countless sands explore,
Archytas, thee one narrow bed contains,
One lonely spot on the Matinian shore.

Ah! what avails it that thy piercing soul
Could heaven's majestic firmament ascend,
Grasp the bright wonders of the starry pole,
Since here at last thy cares, thy labours, end?

Thus Tantalus, the guest of gods, lay low ;
Thus did Tithonus, raised to heaven expire ;
Thus mighty Minos, though ordained to know
The sacred mysteries of his awful sire.

Even the fam'd sage who claim'd Euphorbus'
shield,
Skill'd as thou deem'st, in truth, in nature's lore,
Who taught but mortal clay to death would yield,
Even he again has sunk, to rise no more.

BOSCAWEN.

There is every reason to think, however, that
Horace, notwithstanding that, in common with
the rest of the heathen world, he might enter-

tain many doubts and fears as to the existence of a future state, cherished a decided preponderancy of belief for the doctrines of immortality; and that, whilst only sportively, and for the occasion, an apparent adopter of the opinions of Epicurus and the precepts of Aristippus, he was, on principle, a disciple of Socrates, of Plato, and Epictetus. At least we know, by his own confession, that if in his younger days he had been allured from the path of correct reasoning and morality, by the sensual and indulgent reveries of scepticism, in maturer life he had returned to the more rigid maxims of the Porch; for has he not said of himself,

Parcus Deorum cultor et infrequens,
 Insanientis dum sapientiæ
 Consultus erro; nunc retrorsum
 Vela dare, atque iterare cursus
 Cogor relictos?

Lib. i. Od. 34.

I, who erewhile consumed my days
 Wide wandering in the sceptic maze,
 To maddening wit a prey,

Careless of worship and of prayer ;
Must now my wasted life repair,
And backward steer my way !

PENN.

And that his greatest happiness consisted in entering into conversation with his best and most valued friends on topics of the highest import in morals, philosophy, and religion, we are taught, by the exquisite description which he has given us of the manner in which he loved to spend his social and domestic hours, when retired within the precincts of his Sabine farm ; a picture over which we hang with the fondest admiration, and which places the amiable bard immediately before us in a light worthy of being imitated by all who, despising the trivial topics of the day, possess a mind and a heart capable of rendering the hours of familiar intercourse not only elegantly pleasurable, but contributive to solid happiness and improvement.

O noctes, cœnæque Deûm ! quibus ipse, meique
Ante Larem proprium vescor ;

Prout cuique libido est,
 Siccat inæquales calices conviva solutus
 Legibus insanis ; seu quis capit acria fortis
 Pocula, seu modicis uvescit lætius. Ergo
 Sermo oritur, non de villis domibusve alienis,
 Nec male necne Lepos saltet ; sed quod magis ad nos
 Pertinet, et nescire malum est, agitamus : utrumne
 Divitiis homines, an sint virtute beati ?
 Quidve ad amicitias, usus rectumne, trahat nos ?
 Et quæ sit natura boni ? summumque quid ejus ?

Sermonum, lib. ii. Sat. 6.

O, evenings, and meals divine !
 When friends around my board recline ;
 And every guest is left at ease
 To drink the portion he may please,
 Exempt from rude, licentious force,
 Then follows various discourse.
 Not of our neighbour's fame we tell : —
 If Lepos dances ill or well : —
 But, points that to each bosom go,
 And 'tis reproachful not to know.
 If wealth, or virtue, best supply
 The measure of felicity.
 If friendship's choice shall better rest
 On merit, or self-interest.

In what consists, best understood,
The nature of essential good ;
And what the highest point, at which
That good essential we can reach.

PENN.

It is precisely from a mind and disposition thus constituted, and thus situated as to extrinsic circumstances, that we might expect the peculiarly pensive strain of morality which it has been the purport of this paper more fully to unfold. Endued, as our poet pre-eminently was, with a keen relish for the pleasures and elegancies of life, and which sometimes even hurried him into sensual excess, possessing, at the same time, a heart exquisitely alive to all the best and noblest affections of our nature, and an intellect deeply saturated with, and delighting in, the doctrines of moral and ethic philosophy, he could not but view the shortness and uncertainty of this state of being, and the still greater uncertainty which hung over that which might ensue, after death had laid low the mortal fabric of man, with feelings of almost singular anxiety and regret. Need we wonder, therefore, to find, among the productions of a poet thus en-

dowed, though the general character of those productions be that of sprightliness and gaiety, the occasional intrusion of imagery and sentiment remarkable for their melancholy tone and moral pathos; sometimes introduced as incentives towards a moderate enjoyment of the blessings which remain to us; sometimes as suggested by a mournful retrospect of the transient tenure of all human happiness; but more frequently as correctives of thoughtless dissipation, of luxury, and of vice.

The effect of these touching contemplations on the lot of humanity was not only that of giving interest, tenderness, and relief to a considerable portion of his lyric effusions, but it likewise gradually led to the production of those traits in his character which have rendered it, through all succeeding ages, one of the most pleasing illustrations of rational enjoyment and philosophic content: for though fame and favour courted no man with a more constant devotion, yet Horace soon found that real happiness was only to be found in retirement, where, apart from the seductive blandishments of luxury and art, he might be free to follow the native

bent of his disposition, — to intermingle the melodies of the moral lyre, and the lucubrations of philosophy, with the simplest pleasures of unrepining Nature. Here, then, amidst the woods and fields of his Sabine farm, may we alone discern the genuine tone and texture of his mind, the independency of his soul, the sagacity of his judgment, the innate rectitude of his breast, and, above all, the moderation and cheerful contentedness of his spirit. But the poet shall speak for himself; for after recommending the virtues and the mode of life best calculated to secure tranquillity, and a conscience at peace within itself, he thus beautifully adds, in allusion to his own views and practice: —

Me quoties reficit gelidus Digentia rivus,
Quem Mandela bibit, rugosus frigore pagus;
Quid sentire putas, quid credis, amice, precari?
Sit mihi, quod nunc est, etiam minus; ut mihi vivam
Quod superest ævi, si quid superesse volunt Dî:
Sit bona librorum et provisæ frugis in annum
Copia: ne flitem dubiæ spe pendulus horæ.
Sed satis est orare Jovem quæ donat et aufert;
Det vitam, det opes: æquum mî animum ipse pa-
rabo.

Epistol. lib. i. Epist. 18

Here then, refreshed by cool Digentia's rill,
What is my prayer? That heaven would grant me
still,

To keep the present good, nay even less :
But to myself my life, or long or short, possess.
A moderate store of books and wealth to save,
Lest hope float doubtful, a dependent slave
Upon the passing hour — Enough, to pray
For these to Jove, who gives and takes away !
Let him give life, and health ; myself will find
That first of blessings, a contented mind !
Yet grant me, Phœbus ! with that mind entire,
Age not unhonour'd, nor without the lyre.

BRADSTREET.

With feelings and with moderated wishes such as these, and with a character and conduct in a great degree moulded and regulated by their impression, it is scarcely possible that Horace could have been otherwise than happy, as far as happiness can be said to be attainable in this life ; for though, as we have seen by the numerous quotations already given, that he had formed a just estimate of the fragility and fleeting nature of our being here, and, with the most gifted of the ancient world, looked forward to a future state with much of doubt and

uncertainty, yet he never shrunk from a steady and unappalled contemplation of the issues of life and death. Sometimes, indeed, he would call up the inevitable destiny of man as a motive towards seizing the present moment for social yet moderate enjoyment; but more generally did he view its approach with a perfect though a pensive acquiescence, conscious that, whilst with a determination to render it subservient to the best purposes of morality and religion, he had often held it up as a terror to vice and ambition; he was prepared to meet it in his own person with equanimity and resignation. Accordingly, he appears to have felt a soothing pleasure in meditating on the evening and close of his own days; and, among several exquisite passages to this effect, none perhaps can be quoted as more beautifully interesting than that addressed to his friend Septimius, where he points out the spot he should prefer as the asylum of reposing age:

Tibur Argeo positum colono
Sit meæ sedes utinam senectæ;
Sit modus lasso maris, et viarum,
Militiæque.

Unde si Parcæ prohibent iniquæ,
 Dulce pellitis ovibus Galesi
 Fulmen, et regnata petam Laconi
 Rura Phalanto. —
 Ille te mecum locus et beatæ
 Postulant arces : ibi tu calentem
 Debitâ sparges lacrymâ favillam
 Vatis amici.

Lib. ii. Od. 6.

Let fruitful Tibur's * genial land,
 First planted by an Argive hand,
 Receive my peaceful age :
 There let me rest in gentle ease,
 Nor trust again the stormy seas,
 Nor tempt the battle's rage.

Should envious fate deny these seats,
 Next let me court the blest retreats,
 Where, murmuring through the plain,
 For richest fleeces far renown'd,
 Galesus † laves the realms that own'd
 Phalantus' Spartan reign. —

* Horace's villa was situated near Tibur, originally founded by a Greek colony.

† Galesus is a river which waters Tarentum, founded by a colony of Spartans under Phalantus.

These blest abodes, these chosen bowers,
Shall gild with joy life's fleeting hours.
Here, when my days shall end,
Bathe my loved ashes with a tear,
And cherish, with regret sincere,
Thy poet, and thy friend.

BOSCAWEN.

The features which we have now dwelt upon at some length in the poetry and character of Horace, place him before us in a point of view not only singularly pleasing and impressive, but, at the same time, truly amiable, moral, and instructive. It is evident, that as he advanced in years, and the experience of life came more fully upon him, he learnt to appreciate the pleasures of sense, and the allurements of wealth and power, at their just value; and that, shunning the city as the temple of voluptuousness and scepticism, and the theatre of political intrigue, he sought in the shades of retirement to become acquainted with himself, and with the moral destiny of his species, prepared for, and resigned to, the evils incident to humanity, and, though keenly sensible to, and ever anxious to participate in, the

charms of rational society and moderate enjoyment, yet ready to retire from this scene of things, if not without anxiety and apprehension, yet grateful, satisfied, and uncomplaining. Such was the philosophy which guided the latter and the better days of Horace, which he pressed upon his contemporaries with the most insinuating address, and which has entitled him to be considered, among the bards of antiquity, as beyond all others the poet of reason, and the inculcator of practical morality.

It may not, probably, be thought entirely out of place, if, at the close of a paper whose chief object has been to point out a frequent appeal to, and consideration of, the frail tenure of human life, as forming a valuable and instructive feature in the compositions of the most popular poet of antiquity, I should venture to subjoin the memorial which friendship has suggested to me, for one whom I had known for more than a quarter of a century, and known only to esteem and love. It has been placed by the sorrowing

widow of the deceased in the parish-church of Stanstead, in Suffolk.

Near this tablet
 Are deposited the remains
 Of the Rev. John Plampin, M. A.
 Of Chadacre Hall, in this Parish,
 Rector of Whatfield and Stanstead, in the county
 of Suffolk,
 A Magistrate for the district in which he resided,
 And formerly Fellow and Tutor of Jesus College,
 Cambridge.
 He died May the 30th, 1623, in the 65th Year of
 his age.

If taste, if learning, if the love of art,
 What schools can give, or foreign realms impart,
 May claim a tribute from the polished few,
 Here might it flow, as not unjustly due ;
 But in the fane to pure devotion given,
 Can these light graces point the path to heaven?
 Then be it added, as in truth it can,
 Here sleeps, what all should prize, an honest man!
 Who taught unerring, to his faithful flock,
 Christ as their hope, their living stay, and rock;
 Who lov'd through life, whate'er the vale he trod,
 His Kind, his King, his Country, and his God !

No. XI.

“ Not distant far from Wyeburne” tower
Arose the minstrel’s lowly bower :
A simple hut ; but there was seen
The little garden hedged with green,
The cheerful hearth, and lattice clean:

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

SHAKSPEARE had ever been, especially when in the country, an early riser ; and he now awoke, after a night of calm and refreshing sleep, to the enjoyment of one of the brightest mornings of the season ; for the sun had just become an inmate of his chamber, and began to play upon the rich colours of the arras which surrounded him, with a brilliancy that almost dazzled his eyes. Taking, therefore, a rapid survey of the scenery presented to him from his window, and which, from its beauty, served but to quicken his desire of being speedily amidst it, he hastened down stairs, stopping, however, a few minutes as he passed through the hall, to admire its

very striking and truly venerable aspect; its grotesquely carved roof, its antique music gallery, its stained windows rich in tracery, and its curiously sculptured deer.

Only a very few of the servants were as yet up; and Peter, the old grey-headed groom, who was preparing to go to his stables, very opportunely entered the hall, just in time to unbar the great door which opened into the porch, a task of time and labour, and which required, for its prompt execution, a previous acquaintance with its mechanism and springs. He seemed delighted by the sight of Shakspeare, and made so many respectful enquiries after his family, and more particularly after the poet's little granddaughter, Elizabeth Hall, that our bard could not recollect the epithet, however merited, which he had bestowed on him the preceding night, without some degree of compunction. He shook him, therefore, cordially by the hand, told him he was right glad to see him look so hale and cheerily; and then, after slyly hinting that he would thank him not to fill John's head with any more ghost or goblin stories, he passed forward into the park, leaving Peter, though

proud of the notice he had received, not a little disconcerted by the total want of belief which he had manifestly shown for the legends of Wyeburne Hall.

With the species of scenery which the park unfolded to his view, Shakspeare was peculiarly delighted, as possessing features, perhaps, beyond all others, adapted to call forth and cherish the dreams of imagination. Few situations were there in the county, indeed, as may have been already surmised from what has been briefly stated concerning it, more singular and striking than that which formed the site of Wyeburne Hall; for, though sunk, as it were, in the bosom of a deep valley, the ground at the bottom of this valley gradually rose to the mansion, in the most picturesque manner, from the right bank of the stream; and being wild and broken, and spreading out to not less than a mile in width in this direction, and being at the same time thickly interspersed with trees of some centuries growth, skirted with rocks, and cliffs, and hanging woods, with the village just visible at one extremity, and the Wye meandering through its centre, it might

be said to offer, on a small scale, almost every species of variety. The whole valley, indeed, on both sides of the water, together with a considerable extent of the forests and moorlands beyond and above it, and which had been for ages the property of the Montchenseys, exhibited a perpetual interchange of aspect and scenery, alike calculated to gratify the eye, and to furnish opportunities for rural diversion; the moors affording an ample range for the amusement of hunting and coursing, whilst the Wye and its immediate vicinage offered as rich a field for the sports of fishing and water-hawking.

Though, from his long residence in the capital, Shakspeare had lost some of the keen relish which he once felt for the active diversions of the country, yet was he, as much as ever, the enthusiastic worshipper of Nature, in all her rural habitudes and forms; nor could he wander in the wild and woody glades which stretched nearly on all sides from the hospitable mansion of Montchensey, furnishing, as they occasionally did, such contrasted views of what was most lovely and romantic in landscape-painting, without experiencing that absorption

of mind, that ever-fertile and exclutory association of ideas, to which a creative imagination is so remarkably subject. Thus was it, as his eye, glancing over the sparkling current of the Wye, caught suddenly, through an opening in a group of trees, a prospect of the distant hamlet, as it lay reposing in the morning light, dropped, as it seemed to be, for the purpose of beauty and effect, between the lofty-shelving and wood-clothed sides of the glen, which, in this part of its track, left little more space than was sufficient for the site of the village, its accompanying stream, and a range of greensward, that, on either hand, stretched to the foot of the cliffs. It was an object which, in his glowing fancy, instantly gave birth to a thousand fascinating pictures of human life and character ; and so intensely was he occupied in this world of his own creation, that Helen Montchensey had stolen upon his retreat, and had actually stood for nearly a minute before him, ere he was aware of her presence. She had learnt, almost as soon as she had risen, that he had walked into the park ; and, after a long search, she had found him reclined on the roots of an old oak,

whose gigantic branches stretched far and wide over his head, thus contemplating the little village of Wyeburne, as, gleaming in the sun-light, it was seen terminating the vista which accident, and not art, had opened at this spot. So truly beautiful, indeed, seemed the view under its present disposition of light and shade, that Helen, often as she had seen it at all times of the day, could not help, for the instant, imbibing a portion of the same fascination which had fixed the poet in reverie ; and, after a moment's thought, she felt almost inclined to retire, nor disturb his abstraction, when her dog Tray, who entertained no scruples of the kind, and who had been for some little time endeavouring, but in vain, to arrest her attention, began suddenly to bark, and Shakspeare, starting in surprise from his trance, yet laughing as he beheld the arch look with which his fair visitor surveyed him, " Yes, my dear Helen," he exclaimed, " you may well seem astonished at seeing your father's sage friend thus stretched, like a love-sick youth, beneath the shade : but I am, I must confess, enamoured with the aspect of yonder lovely village ; and if, on a nearer approach, it

should realise the visions which this first and distant view of it has awakened in my imagination, I will call it a little paradise on earth."

"Ah! my dear Sir," cried Helen, sighing, "how often does it happen in life, that we dress a distant object in rainbow colours, which fade as we draw near! But in this instance," she added, resuming her wonted cheerfulness, "I may venture to say, you will not be disappointed; for Wyeburne is, indeed, a lovely spot, and as little contaminated, perhaps, with human vice and folly, as the frailty of our nature will allow."

"Had the reflection you have just uttered," rejoined Shakspeare, "fallen from myself, it had been, I trust, more in character; for your pilgrimage has been short, my fair friend, and, I would fain think, as yet unmingled with aught that can have paled the bloom of hope."

"And does not the canker oftentimes eat its way into the bud?" said Helen, whilst a tear started to her eye; but a moment dissipated, or seemed to dissipate, her sorrow; and she instantly proposed a walk to the village. "It is little more than a mile," she observed, "and we

shall be thither and back again before the heat becomes oppressive."

"Were it a dozen, my dear Helen," returned the poet with emotion, "I would gladly accompany you;" and taking her arm within his, they soon reached the banks of the river, where a path which followed the course of the stream led them by a very delightful, though somewhat circuitous route, to the object they had in view.

Nothing could well, indeed, surpass either in variety or amenity, this walk through the park grounds to the little hamlet of Wyeburne; whilst at the same time the cool breeze which just played upon the surface of the water, and the lively verdure of the greensward on its banks, yet glistening with dew, produced that delicious sensation of freshness which an hour or two's further advance in the day would, at this season of the year, have inevitably dissipated. "How exhilarating to the spirits," exclaimed Shakspeare, "is this prime of a summer's morning, and how all things seem to smile, my love, on our approach to your favourite village; for not only do we look up delighted to these eminences just kindling in the rosy light of day,

but how soothing at their base swells the murmur of this winding stream, and how grateful from its banks is the spicy perfume of the meadow-sweet, fit accompaniments for the song which is now carolling over our heads so sweetly from the mounting lark; whilst before us yonder little hamlet, nestled, as it were, mid rocks, and cliffs, and hanging woods, seems to sleep like some blessed creature in the eye of heaven! It is altogether a perfect contrast to the wild and rugged aspect of the glen through which I travelled yesterday, and where Roland and his banditti were accompaniments so much in character, that to have wanted them would have been to weaken, in a very great degree, the effect of the scene."

"And yet this Roland, as you have yourself experienced, my dear Sir, is not deficient in those touches of courtesy and humanity which mark a gentler breeding than his present occupation would warrant; and his personal appearance, I am told, so far from indicating a homely and untutored origin, is noble and prepossessing in a high degree."

"It is even so," replied the bard, "and I

were ungrateful, indeed, did I not fully and freely acknowledge it; but my allusion was to the violence so often inseparable from the mode of life to which he is devoted, and more particularly to the stern and savage features which but too well characterise the greater part of his associates. But I marvel much that, as your language would imply, you have never found out who this extraordinary young man is; for he seemed to me, from his manner and the few broken hints which dropped almost involuntarily from his tongue, to be deeply and even tenderly interested for the welfare of Wyburne, and its inhabitants."

A death-like paleness seemed to *stead* over the cheek of Helen as Shakspeare uttered these last words, and she evidently trembled with emotion as she faintly said, "I should be sorry, indeed, to think that the robber Roland has any affinity to, or connection with the peasantry of Wyburne; but tell me, my dear Sir, for you have already seen more of this adventurer than has, I believe, yet fallen to the lot of any resident in this valley, are his features, as report has sometimes affirmed, of a swarthy and somewhat

olive hue?" "His complexion," replied the poet, "is of a deep brown, and his hair black as the wing of the raven." "Then it cannot be," ejaculated Helen to herself, the rose rekindling on her cheek, and her eye resuming its former lustre, "it cannot be! my father's suspicions must be unfounded."

They had now nearly reached the little village of Wyburne, whose cottages, as they advanced, appeared isolated by groups of trees, and dispersed along both banks of the stream. They were in general small, though strongly built of wood and clay, consisting but of two rooms on the ground floor, of which the inner was for the master and his family, and the outer for the servants, and they were thatched with straw or sedge. But there were a few amongst them on a larger scale, coated with white lime or cement, and very neatly roofed with reed, and having three or more rooms above and below. To one of this latter description, which stood near the centre of the village, beneath the shelter of a large and venerable oak, with a garden in front dropping down to the water, and an orchard and small field behind, extending to

the base of the cliff, Helen directed her steps. And here Shakspeare could not avoid reiterating his sense of admiration for the peculiar features of the scene. It was, indeed, in all respects, worthy of his praise; for he had seldom, even in imagination, great master though he were of fancy's fairest forms, pictured a retreat more lovely and sequestered than was this. Conceive then, gentle reader, the Wye, in this part of its course, assuming a more varied aspect than usual; sometimes reflecting, with the most unbroken serenity, every the ~~most~~ minute leaf or tendril that hung over its ~~clear~~ surface, and then suddenly whitening its ~~face~~, as it fell over small precipices in its ~~course~~, exhibiting numerous beautiful cascades, and sending to the ear a music alike pleasing and tranquillising in its effect. Conceive this beautiful stream, skirted on either hand with lofty cliffs, clothed to their very summits, and winding in such a manner, that whilst the ~~cottages~~ were placed by its direction in the ~~most~~ varied and opposed situations, each with its little plantation of ash or elm, the whole valley of the hamlet was visible, from one extremity to the

other, Wyeburne Hall, with its tower and turrets, terminating the vista on a gentle ascent, at one end, and the church, with its light and elegant spire, rising against a back-ground of darkly-wooded cliffs, closing it on the other.

A gentle tap at the door of the cottage, at which Helen had now arrived, was almost immediately answered by the appearance of a man pretty far advanced in years, but whose countenance, though strongly marked by the hand of time, exhibited such striking indications of intelligence, together with so much benevolent sweetness of expression, as instantly to prepossess whoever saw him in his favour. There was something, indeed, in his whole person and manner, though his dress was of the simplest kind, consisting merely of a gray fustian frock, belted loosely around him, that at once bespoke a character many degrees removed from the customary cast of rural life. In his figure he was tall and thin, and, if somewhat stooping from the pressure of age, yet, notwithstanding this, and the still more unequivocal proof of senility which was afforded by a beard and hair white as snow, his eye retained much of its

former lustre, and a portion of the glow of earlier days yet lingered on his cheek.

“ And how are you, my dear Simon ?” exclaimed Helen, as she affectionately offered him her hand, whilst a smile of delighted satisfaction beamed on the features of the old man ; “ and how is my good Dorothy ?” — “ Well, I thank you, my honoured mistress,” he replied, “ but wont you and the gentleman walk in ?”

“ I am rather too early a visitor, I am afraid, Simon ; but the beauty of the morning having tempted me and my companion to stroll thus far, I would not return without enquiring after you.”

“ Heaven bless you, my dear lady ; but do walk in ; our morning’s meal is just set out, and if your friend can but put up with village fare, I would fain entreat you to break your fast with us.”

There was a frankness and cordiality in the invitation which could not be mistaken ; and Helen and the poet, after a momentary interchange of looks, entered the cottage of Simon Fraser.

If Shakspeare had been pleased with the

site and exterior of Simon's dwelling, he was still more gratified by the neatness and comfort which reigned within. After passing through a pretty large kitchen, whose ample fire-place was well lined with fitches of bacon, they found Dorothy, who seemed many years younger than her husband, busily engaged, in a little parlour on the left, in arranging a few simple articles for the meal to which Simon had alluded, and which that good old poet Tusser has quaintly termed "breakfast doings." She had covered a table, which, from its massy legs, appeared to be of finely-polished oak, with some of her whitest napery, and on it she had placed a loaf of wheaten bread, a few rashers of bacon, some new-laid eggs, a cheese, cream-curds and milk, and a beautifully crisp and white salad, whilst a rosy-cheeked girl was just entering the room with a jug of nut-brown ale.

Their morning's walk would have given both to Helen and Shakspeare an appetite for much coarser food than was now before them ; and such, indeed, were the cordial entreaties of Simon and his wife, that to have refused would have seemed not only ungracious, but even un-

kind. They, therefore, sate down with the worthy couple, though the bard could not help admiring, as he partook of their plain but wholesome cheer, the somewhat anomalous character of much that was around him ; for his kind hostess, like her husband, though perhaps not in an equal degree, showed a bearing and address beyond the class of society to which she apparently belonged. She was, indeed, treated by Helen more as a friend than an inferior, and though habited in the plainest costume of the housewife of those days, in a white hood, a russet-coloured mantle, and with her purse and keys pendent at her side, there was an ease, a courtesy, and gentle self-possession about her which surprised even as much as it pleased.

Nor were there fewer contrasts in the furniture of the cottage, than between the garb and manners of its inmates ; for, whilst much of the former was, as to quality and form, in the commonest though neatest style of the farmer of the sixteenth century, there were scattered amongst it indications, considering the rank of life in which they were found, of

very superior taste and acquirements. Thus in the room where our little party was assembled to breakfast, whilst three-legged stools, treene platters, and wooden spoons, with one large pewter salt, formed the sole accompaniments for the table, there were to be seen in various directions, books, and manuscripts, and music: and in a parlour on the other side of the little hall or kitchen, the door of which stood open, as did that also of the one in which they sate, in consideration of the warmth of the weather, not only were shelves apparently well loaded with books, very visible, but there lay also reclined against their lower range, an old but richly ornamented harp.

It was just as these singular combinations had made their full impression on the mind of Shakspeare, that Helen Montchensey, after casting a timid and somewhat confused glance towards the opposite apartment, enquired of Simon if he had heard nothing lately of his poor young friend Hubert Gray.

“ Ah ! Mistress Helen,” cried the old man, whilst the tears coursed each other down his cheeks, “ I now begin quite to despair; it is nearly

three months since we have seen him here, and he then staid with us but a day, and he seemed so woe-begone and wretched, that I once more tried hard to persuade him to remain with us, and to tell me the real cause of his strange absence and distress of mind; but I could get nothing more from him than his usual declaration, that he was unwilling any longer to be a burthen to us. Ah! Madam, what shall we do? for we loved this dear youth as if he had been our own child, and he will now bring our grey hairs with sorrow to the grave!"

An expression of the deepest sympathy and emotion agitated the pale features of Helen, but she replied not; whilst Shakspeare, after a moment's pause, and with the view of eliciting some further information on a subject which began to interest him, ventured to remark to Simon, that he presumed the little library and instrument in the other room were the property of the young person of whom they were speaking.

"Yes," he replied, "nothing but his book and his harp were once the delight of Hubert Gray; but he is now strangely altered, Sir,

and I can never enter that room, where I have spent so many happy hours with the poor boy, without feeling my heart ache." There was something in the tone and expression with which this was uttered, that strongly affected Shakspeare, and he could not help asking, if he might be allowed for a moment to look into this little study. "It is in strange disorder, Sir," said Dorothy, "for my good man was not willing that any thing should be altered or even moved in it since the dear child left us; but if you will excuse this," she added, looking at her husband as she spoke, "I am sure my Simon will have no objection."

"Give me leave then," said Helen, smiling through her tears, "to act as usher to my friend on this occasion, for Hubert and I," she continued, turning to Shakspeare, "have been long pupils of the same master, and more than once has it happened that when children, we have taken lessons together in this very room, whilst our good Fraser here watched our progress rather with the affection of a parent than a mere instructor. As she said this, they entered the study, whilst Shakspeare could not

help looking upon Simon as he followed in a slow and somewhat melancholy step, with much of augmenting interest and esteem; for such had been the unaffected simplicity of his language and manner, as to give not the smallest intimation that he had ever acted a part which was in those days so generally allied to pedantry and self-importance.

There was, indeed, in every thing which surrounded the good old man, the same character of propriety and simple taste; for with the exception of the harp, which seemed from its decorations to have belonged to some high-born minstrel of an age long gone by, the apartment of Hubert Gray exhibited an equal degree of modesty and plainness in its attire. Its wealth was evidently in its literary stores, and these were of a description which speedily attracted the notice of the bard of Avon; for mingled with several minor classics and elementary tracts on education, peeped forth *Chaucer* and *Spenser*, *England's Helicon*, and *The Paradyce of Daintye Devices*. On a large oaken table were spread out a volume of *North's Plutarch*, another of *Holinshed's Chronicles*, and

Froissart by Bouchier Lord Berners; and on the sill of the window shaded by honey-suckles, and commanding a beautiful view of the Wye, and the wooded cliffs beyond, lay together with a lute and some loose manuscripts, a copy of *Sidney's Arcadia*, and of that "noble and joyous book," *La Morte d'Arthur*.

"By my troth, Master Fraser," exclaimed Shakspeare, somewhat astonished at finding himself in such company in the little village of Wyburne, "but you have gotten here a rare collection of choice wits; and I marvel much that from such associates, and from such a Paradise of peace as smiles around you, your young friend could have had the heart to steal away. Surely something very extraordinary must have urged to such a flight."

As Simon was about to answer, Helen, who had taken up a few thin quartos that were laid partly open on the cushion of an ancient and very high-backed chair, came archly smiling to Shakspeare. "And look, my dear Sir," she said, slyly placing them in his hands, and pointing to some manuscript notes which occupied a fly-leaf in a copy of *Romeo and Juliet*,

“ what think you of the taste and literature of Wyeburne? Is not this to enjoy true fame?” The interrogatory, however, and the smile were instantly followed by a half-suppressed sigh, as the fate of him who had written these remarks passed across her mind; she blushed, and ere the bard could fashion a reply, she added, addressing him in a rather alarmed tone and manner, “ But pardon me, my honoured friend, if I hurry you away, for by this time my father must have missed me at the hall, and his anxiety will, I fear, be awakened; — will you give me your company on my return? — And now, my kind Simon,” she continued, for her companion had immediately assented to her proposal, “ I cannot say farewell without charging you to mark this amongst the whitest mornings in your calendar; for you have hitherto, though unconsciously, been entertaining one for whom I know you to have long felt the deepest veneration — Shakspeare, our own and England’s Shakspeare !”

“ Pooh, pooh, Mistress Helen,” exclaimed the bard laughing, “ this is making mountains of mole-hills indeed. Give me your hand,

Master Simon, and let me tell you, to use a right pithy though somewhat homely phrase, there is no love lost between us. I hope soon, indeed, to be better acquainted both with you and your pupil Hubert, truant though he be !”

“ Ah, Sir,” rejoined Simon Fraser, his form dilating with conscious pride and pleasure as he spoke, “ how would my poor boy have been delighted, could he have witnessed this day ! for his whole mind has been rapt up in the study of your writings, which he was wont to term, and justly too, transcripts of the human heart. But he is gone I fear for ever !”

“ I did never dream, Master Fraser,” said the bard, alike gratified and astonished by what he had heard and seen, “ of finding dramatic criticism amidst the cottages of this secluded valley, but I honour her retreat ; and will venture to predict, notwithstanding this confession of surprise, for poet and prophet you know are sometimes combined, that Hubert Gray will not long be a stranger to Wyeburne.”

“ And now, my dear Helen,” he continued, as having bade farewell to Simon and his wife, they commenced their return to the hall,

“ prythee tell me who Hubert Gray and Simon Fraser are; for my curiosity, I can assure you, has been not a little awakened by the appearance of the one, and the slight sketch which I have had of the other.”

“ Would it were in my power,” replied Helen,” but, strange as it may seem, I can tell you little that will be satisfactory on the subject. All I know of Simon Fraser is, that about thirteen years ago, when I was not quite six years old, I can just remember his coming frequently to the Hall, and that shortly after this period, he began to instruct me and one of my little brothers, for I had then two, in the elements of English. He was a great favourite not only with my father but with us all; for though then rather advanced in years, he had nothing of the reserve or peevishness of old age about him, but, on the contrary, was remarkably kind and affectionate in his manners, singularly fond of children, and never so pleased, indeed, as when, either at his own cottage or at the Hall, he was playing to us on his harp, and singing to us songs of the olden time.

“ It was at this happy period of our lives.

when, one day, on visiting, as we often did, the cottage of our good preceptor, we found little Hubert Gray, a lovely child about a year or two older than myself, and who was soon established as our frequent playmate and companion. He was peculiarly lively and engaging in his disposition, and so won upon the heart of my father, that when I lost my poor brothers, who died before they reached the age of ten, he would often come to the Hall for days in succession, and we were allowed to take lessons together of Simon both on the lute and harp.

“As Hubert Gray grew up he became a general favourite with all who knew him; much of the liveliness, indeed, which had accompanied his very boyish years, wore off, and was succeeded by a somewhat pensive and thoughtful cast of mind; but he was ever kind and courteous in all he said and did, and to a pleasing person and very intelligent set of features, he added the infinitely more valuable acquisitions of a feeling heart and cultivated mind; for Simon Fraser, as he truly told us, loves him like his own child, and has, in fact, taught him all he knew; and Simon Fraser, my friend, though very plain and

simple in his habits and attire, and to outward view little other than a mere cotter, is, as you have doubtless perceived, no ordinary man."

"It is scarcely possible, my dear Helen, to be many minutes in the company of Simon Fraser without discovering that both nature and education have conspired to place him much above the level of that class of society to which at first sight he would seem to belong, and I am, therefore, the more desirous to learn not only his history, but that also of his adopted son Hubert Gray, whose character and conduct are not less interesting and perhaps still more extraordinary; for you have yet to account for his late wayward desertion of all that apparently he could hold dear upon earth. Can you give me no reason," he continued, glancing a look of keen but good humoured suspicion on his companion, "why he should thus so ungallantly leave his young friend and fellow-pupil, to ramble no one knows whither? and have you made no enquiries as to his origin, or that of his preceptor?"

"O yes," replied Helen with the utmost artlessness, "interested as you must naturally con-

ceive me to be in the welfare of both, I have made many enquiries, but hitherto with little success; for a studied obscurity appears to be thrown over every attempt to develop the mystery, both on the part of Fraser and my father. The latter, indeed, has repeatedly told me that he is perfectly ignorant with regard to the birth and parentage of Hubert, for that understanding Simon to be solemnly pledged to secrecy on the subject, he had forbore urging him to a disclosure; and all that I have been able to obtain from the same source, in relation to the personal history of Fraser, has been confined to the mere statement of his being the son of a former bard or minstrel, a retainer of a branch of an ancient family connected with our own; that he came hither about twenty years ago, purchasing a little farm with property which had descended to him from the patronage of that house, and that having no children, he had contrived to live decently on the products of his few acres, together with the emoluments arising from his preceptorship at the Hall, and the small salary which he annually received for the maintenance and care of Hubert Gray."

“But you have forgotten, my love,” said Shakspeare, smiling as he spoke, “to assign any reason for the ungracious conduct of this quondam playmate of yours. What could be his motives for quitting the little paradise in which he was seemingly placed?”

“I believe,” returned Helen, and she blushed and rather hesitated as she replied, “it may, in a great measure, have been occasioned by a circumstance to which Simon Fraser alluded when speaking of the distressed state of mind of the poor youth, for the salary which used regularly to be transmitted for his education and support, has for the last two years, from some cause or other, been discontinued, and he cannot bear the idea of becoming a pensioner on the scanty means of these good old people, without any prospect of a restitution; and my father too,” she continued, her voice assuming a more tremulous accent, whilst her eyes were bent upon the ground, “has for a still longer time estranged himself from him, and not many months, indeed, before he first absented himself from Wyeburne, forbade him all access to the Hall, treating even the aged Simon, whom

he had hitherto patronised, and I may say, highly esteemed, with neglect, on his account. Oh! my dear Sir," she added, after a pause of a few moments, slowly raising her eyes yet glistening with tears, and fixing them with a look of beseeching sorrow on the countenance of the bard, "if I could but interest you, who possess so much influence over my father, in the fate and fortunes of Hubert Gray, and who is, I do assure you, not unworthy of your regard, I think we should soon see him restored to Wyburne and to peace of mind; for it is the displeasure of my father, involuntarily, and, believe me, sinlessly incurred, on the part of poor Hubert, that sits heaviest at his heart."

"I can truly tell you, my sweet girl," rejoined the poet, "that you have already very powerfully excited my sympathies in behalf both of Simon and his scholar; and as I think I can surmise," he added, looking archly at Helen, "what may partly, and yet very innocently, have occasioned this unhappy coolness between Hubert and his former kind patron, I will venture to promise you, both for your sake and for that of the memory of days long since past,

that, provided nothing should occur to counterpoise my present impressions, I will use every effort to restore this desponding young varlet to the wonted good-graces of your father."

Thus conversing, they had nearly, and almost imperceptibly to themselves, reached the Hall, when from a thicket, or kind of wilderness, which skirted the pleasure garden, there started forth one of those customary appendages of the domestic establishment of the times, which, under the appellation of the *knave*, or *fool*, was deemed to be an indispensable protection against the encroachments of tedium and ennui. He was dressed in the usual costume of the character, in particoloured coat and hose, with hood and cocks-comb, bells and bauble, and came skipping towards them in high glee, clapping his hands, and pointing to his young mistress as he danced along, and singing

"The bonniest lass in all the land."

"Ah, Morley, my honest man," cried Helen, "and where is my father?" I am afraid he

has thought me a sad defaulter from his side this morning." — "Odds my life! Mistress Helen, but you'll be rated soundly, I can tell ye," answered Morley, grinning; "an' I had not as lief be skinned and fly-blown as stand in your shoes, never trust me." — "Why, what's the matter, knave?" said Helen, laughing. — "Matter, why there's nuncle yonder, chafing and fretting as he ambles up and down by his peach-wall, and swears you have run away with his poet."

"You see into what a scrape you have already gotten me, Master Shakspeare," exclaimed Helen, whilst Morley, struck by the name, jumped almost half his own height, calling out in an ecstasy, "Body of me; an a fool and a poet may shake hands," running up to the bard, and stretching forth his arm, "there's my digits; — but you must not away with my lady-bird," he continued, his features relaxing from a broad expression of delight into one of sorrowful import; and then, keenly surveying his new acquaintance from head to foot, he added, softly, his countenance brightening as

he muttered, " Safe, safe, — a little too late i'the day, a little too late i'the day.

" Oken leaves began to wither
Heavilie, heavilie, heigh ho !"

" And so, fool, I am to conclude," said Shakspeare, smiling, " that you think me too far gone in the vale of years to play the wooer any longer. Why, you rogue, spite of thy sunken eye and withered cheek, I do suspect thou hast thyself a favourite in a corner yet."

" Bless thy five wits, how they jump to the mark !" cried Morley, leering at the poet, and repeating

" Hey, Robyn
Jolly Robyn,
Tell me how thy leman doth,
And thou shalt knowe of mine :"

and then, turning to his young mistress with a countenance of the most ludicrous gravity, he added,

" The smoakie sighes, the bitter teares
That I in vaine have wasted."

“ Pooh, pooh, Morley,” exclaimed Helen, somewhat impatiently, “ prythee cease thy fooling, and tell me where my father is.”

“ By the foot of Pharaoh, madam mine,” returned the provoking knave, assuming a most consequential air, “ we whom the gods have made poetical must not hide our talent in a napkin.

“ Build me of boughs a little bower,
And set it near my lady’s tower.”

“ Nay, an thou wilt not answer a plain question, fool,” interrupted Helen, “ I must be fain to have thee put in the stocks;” a threat which, though seldom, if ever, carried into execution, had usually its effect upon poor Morley, who dreading this infringement on human liberty, would become alarmed on the instant; and accordingly, on this occasion, after quoting, in what he thought a very touching manner, the quaint line

“ I love thee, my darling, as ball of mine eye,”

he added, “ Follow, follow me, nuncle’s by the south peach-wall;” and vaulting on before, and

beckoning them to follow, and ever and anon turning to hasten their step, nodding and grimacing to Helen, and singing

A pretye foote to trippe and goe,
But of a solemne pace perdye,
And marvellous slowe in majestye,

he led them into the copse, and through that into the adjoining pleasure grounds.

“ We shall find my father, I dare say,” said Helen to her companion, “ somewhere in the gardens, and we will, therefore, for once, take the fool for our guide.” — “ A broken reed, I am afraid,” remarked Shakspeare, “ for the rogue looks, by his sly and consequential leer, as if some wise scheme were ripening in his brain.”

They now, however, following close after Morley, entered a grove, ornamented with trellis work and walks of close-shorn verdure, and so embrowned with trees that, as honest Hentzner says, “ it seemed a place pitched on by pleasure to dwell in, along with health.” From this they suddenly stepped on a delicate and open green, on the further side of which,

skirted by knots and beds of flowers, which formed a kind of Mosaic floor, rose in appearance a plantation, corresponding with that which they had just left, but which proved, on passing into it, a perfect wilderness, or labyrinth. Here the fool, who went on before, playing all manner of antics, began to raise his voice to a somewhat louder pitch, singing as was his wont, snatches and burdens of old songs, till, at length, turning quickly round, he came up to the side of Helen, murmuring, as he approached her, and with a most significant smile on his countenance, —

I could tell thee close in thine eare
A tale that thou would'st like to heare,
I dare well say,
As ladye gay
E'er loved to hear of her runaway ;

words which had scarcely passed his lips, when there suddenly glanced across one of the numerous paths which intersected the thicket, the figure of a young man, dressed in a frock of Lincoln green, and with a hunting pole in his hand. It was, however, but a momentary

vision ; for just as Helen, almost fainting with surprise, had involuntarily exclaimed, " Good heavens ! it is Hubert Gray !" the fool, with a vociferation which drowned every other accent, called out, " Gadzooks ! another sail ! another sail !" and then, running up one of the alleys, and shouting " Nuncle, nuncle," as loud as he could, Montchensey was presently seen approaching, with Morley skipping before him, pointing to Helen, and carolling with all his might —

Now reed me aright, and do not miss,
What bonny sweet dame is this, I wis ?

It was evident, however, that something had disturbed the temper of Montchensey, who was not easily provoked ; for he appeared threatening the fool with his stick, and was heard, as he drew near, speaking to him in an angry tone, and exclaiming, " Who was that, you rogue, whom I saw just now thridding yonder maze in green ? and where hast thou been all this time ? Didst thou not promise me to be back in ten minutes ? and here hast thou been gone better than an hour."

Morley, who had by this time gotten to the side of his young mistress, put on a very melancholy and somewhat alarmed look at the charge; but this was speedily followed by a change of feature so vacant, and at the same time so laughably quaint, as almost to disarm resentment, whilst he stammered forth —

Perdie, I said it not,
Nor never thought to doo :
As well as I ye wot
I had no power thereto.

“ I tell thee what, fool,” said Montchensey, whose returning good humour was somewhat checked by this attempt at denial, however ludicrously made, “ I must positively have this evil spirit of lying whipped out of thee. Go, get thee gone, ere thy shoulders and my cane become better acquainted;” an injunction which was instantly complied with by Morley, who, glad to have escaped so well, ran capering off in great glee, and singing, in his thoughtless mood, —

Many a faire lasse, borne up and downe,
Many a broker in a threid bare gowne,
Many a bankrowte scarce worth a crowne
In London.

“ This knave,” continued Montchensey, turning to Shakspeare, “ is ever in a mischief; and were it not that he was brought up by my father, and I remember him with the kindness of early association, I should be almost tempted to get rid of him; for I do think this custom of keeping domestic fools would, to adopt a phraseology of your own, my friend, be more honoured in the breach than in the observance.”

“ I am afraid,” returned the bard, addressing Montchensey with a smile of the utmost benevolence, “ that I have been indirectly the cause of poor Morley’s disgrace; but, tempted by the beauty of the morning, and the romantic appearance of your village, and, above all, by accidentally meeting with my fair hostess here, I had forgotten, I must confess, all note of time.”

“ And will you blame me, my dear father,”

said Helen, as a blush of the most ingenuous simplicity just tinted her cheeks, "when I add, that I have visited with our friend the cottage of Simon Fraser?"

"I cannot, my Helen," said Montchensey, extending his hand to her in the kindest manner; "nor do I wonder at your regard for that singular but amiable old man. Indeed, I take blame to myself for my late inattention towards him. But saw ye no one else there," he continued, assuming a solemn and somewhat reproachful manner, "in whose interest you could take a part?"

"No one, save Dorothy, my father; but I will freely own to you," she added, again slightly colouring, "for why should I conceal it, that I made some enquiries after poor Hubert Gray?"

"If I am not much mistaken," he replied, "though I confess I am somewhat startled by the occurrence, I saw him but now in yonder part of the thicket," pointing to the spot in which he had been seen by Helen; "and I suspect that that rogue Morley, with whom he was ever a great favourite, has, instead of

searching after you, as I had directed, been engaged with him." Then, turning to Shakspeare, he added, "You have, doubtless, my friend, whither you have been this morning, heard the story of Hubert Gray; it is one of some peculiarity, and not without its share of mystery; and as it is possible you may have mentally blamed my conduct in the business, I could wish to enter into some exculpatory explanation with you on the subject. We will, therefore, if you please, adjourn to the library, and believe me, my dear Helen," he continued, observing the tears starting in her eyes, and taking her once more affectionately by the hand, "believe me, when I add, that in all which concerns this poor youth, I know you have acted from the best and purest of motives."

They now hastily passed into the more open and artificial pleasure-grounds, Montchensey remarking, as they left the coverture, "You see, Master Shakspeare, that, following the recommendation of my Lord Verulam, I have adopted his plan of a heath or wilderness, 'framed as much as may be to a natural wild-

ness; and it is, indeed, the only addition which I have made to the gardens of my ancestors."

"It is one, my friend," observed the poet, as they were entering the flower-garden, "which does honour to your taste; and here too, I can perceive another proof of it, for, to use once more the language of our great contemporary, 'because the breath of flowers is far sweeter in the air, where it comes and goes, like the warbling of music, than in the hand,'* you have taken care, I see, to select all those flowers and plants that do best perfume its breezes."

The compliment was not unmerited, for nothing could, in fact, be more varied, rich, and delicate than the odours which were wafted from this paradise of sweets; a paradise, however, which was constructed in exact conformity to the costume of the sixteenth century, and abounding, therefore, in terrace-mounds, curiously figured parterres, shorn shrubs, alleys, arbours, clipped ever-green hedges, arched walks, and all the diversities of fillery and

* Vide Bacon's Essays, No. 46., of Gardens, p. 269. edit. of 1632.

pleach-work, and interspersed with statues, jets d'eau, and basons of water.

From this highly ornamented division of the pleasure-ground, and which opened at one extremity into a very extensive and loftily walled fruit garden, our party immediately passed into the court of the fountains formerly mentioned, and thence, through the hall, into the library, where some slight refreshment had been prepared for them from an early hour in the morning.

(To be continued.)

No. XII.

Who well acquainted with that commune plight
Which sinful horror workes in wounded hart,
With goodly counsell and advisement right
He much aswag'd the passion of his spright,
That he his pain endur'd, as seeming now more
light.

SPENSER.

“MY kind host,” said Shakspeare, as they entered the library to which in our last number we had conducted the Montchenseys and their guest, and where, as was then mentioned, a few viands had been set out for their refreshment, “I have already this morning too sufficiently satisfied the demands of appetite with cottage fare, to admit of my partaking of your bounty, for the hospitality of Simon Fraser would allow of no denial; but here,” he added, looking round him with great complacency, “is a store of mental food that will require somewhat more time for digestion.”

“ It has been accumulating for many years,” returned Montchensey, “ and I trust, you will find it choice in its quality ; but you will pardon me if I now endeavour to recall your attention to the humble cottage at Wyeburne, for it is beneath that reeded roof that much of my present anxiety has lately originated.” Then, turning to his daughter who, on this intimation, was quitting the room, “ I will not forget, my love,” he added, “ to do you that justice which your filial affection and obedience so justly merit.”

“ And now, my admirable friend,” he proceeded, “ I will not again apologise to you for the introduction of a subject in which, from the unexpected occurrences of this morning, it is possible you may feel an interest ; for, though without any assurance on your part, I conclude from what has incidentally dropped from Helen, that you must be acquainted with many of the particulars of the story of Hubert Gray.”

“ I have heard enough, Master Montchensey,” replied the poet, “ to excite in my breast a very lively concern both for the fate of Hubert Gray and of Simon Fraser, and I sincerely wish

it may comport with your views and feelings to restore this young man to your wonted countenance and good favour, provided he has done nothing which can justly entitle him to lasting displeasure."

"I am almost ashamed to confess," said Montchensey, "that, in this business, I have been, in a great measure, the architect of my own sorrows; for I have suffered Hubert and Helen to be much together even from their childhood; and I ought to have recollected, that it was scarcely possible for two young and unrelated persons of different sexes and of the most amiable dispositions, to be long and exclusively companions, without the interchange of the tenderest affections."

"I am to infer then," remarked Shakspeare, "that the obscurity which, I understand, hangs over the birth and parentage of Hubert Gray, forms the principal, if not the sole defect in his character."

"Until within these few months," answered Montchensey, "this has been precisely the case; for how could I bear to encourage what might lead to a union with one of whose origin and

connections I knew nothing! — It is now about sixteen years ago, shortly after an event that has never ceased to overwhelm me in the deepest affliction, that I first saw Hubert Gray, then a mere child of but four years old, beneath the roof of Simon Fraser. Young as he was, there was something in his features so peculiarly lovely, touching, and intelligent, and rendered perhaps more touching by the mystery which surrounded him, and which I found Simon pledged not to reveal, that I felt myself strongly impressed in his favour: and when, two or three years afterwards, I understood he was to receive all the advantages which education and ample remittances could procure, all that Simon, who was the earliest preceptor in my own family, could in the first instance impart, and all that masters elsewhere could subsequently confer, I hesitated not to admit him as the playmate and fellow-student of my own children. He grew up, indeed, a favourite with us all, as pleasing in his person and manners, as he was amiable in disposition, and accomplished in mind; and when it pleased Providence to deprive me of my sons, he seemed as it were to

supply their place, being, though nominally the guest and lodger of Simon Fraser, almost daily here. It was not, in fact, until I fully perceived the nature of the attachment which subsisted between him and Helen, that any coolness was shown by me. I thought it then highly necessary, and simply for the reason which I have already assigned, to interfere; and I must here, in justice to my daughter declare, that though I believe her heart to be deeply entangled in this bewitching snare, yet she listened to my wishes and injunctions with a filial deference and resignation that has, if possible, more than ever endeared her to my bosom. A very slight degree of reserve, indeed, on her part, all, in fact, that her tenderness for the youth would allow her to assume, was sufficient to effect the purpose I had in view; for there is a spirit of independency about Hubert, an acuteness of sensibility which speedily takes alarm, and he soon ceased to appear where the wonted cordiality, however slightly diminished, had failed to greet him. Indeed, with the exception of the casual view which I think I had of him but just now in the plantation, and which has, I

confess, greatly surprised me, I know not that I have seen him for more than a twelvemonth.

“ I must further own, that in thus discharging what I thought an indispensable duty to my family, I have not only deprived myself of the society of one who was endeared to me by many amiable qualities, and, I fear, at the same time, materially injured the health and spirits of my beloved Helen, but I suspect that I have in a great measure been the cause of driving this unhappy young man from his only home, and, what is worse, of precipitating him, if some late reports be true, into courses which, even if the mystery of his birth could be cleared up to my satisfaction, might prove an insuperable bar to all his hopes and prospects.”

“ Shakspeare started at the information which the latter part of this narrative was calculated to convey, and after a pause of some moments, in which he seemed absorbed in thought, he at length said; “ I can truly feel for your situation as a parent, Master Montchensey; but, nevertheless, I must say, that I think the fate of Hubert Gray is greatly to be pitied; for his was, I apprehend, the silent homage of the heart,

and considering the history and character which you have yourself given of the youth, how could it but be answered! I am, indeed, to a degree which surprises even myself, interested about the destiny of this young man; he is one, I think, after my own heart, and it shall go hard but I will fathom the bottom of a mystery which seems, in more directions than one, to threaten very undeservedly the extinction of his happiness, and, perchance, of his life; trusting, that should I find his birth what you cannot disapprove, you will not suffer any irregularity into which he may have been lately drawn, and which may probably, indeed, be considered as in some part the result of your own measures, to stand in his way."

"Be it so, my friend," replied Montchensey, "and I cannot but add, that in accomplishing your kind purpose, you will take from my heart one of the many burthens which press heavily upon it. But why should I thus entangle you in my domestic sorrows, why suffer the clouds which darken my own days, to spread their influence over all who approach me? Let me then, I pray you, turn your attention to another

and a better subject; and here, Master Shakespeare," he continued, taking up a small volume which lay upon the library table, "is one upon which you, and you only, I apprehend, can throw the light I wish for." As he said this, he placed in the poet's hands his own Collection of Sonnets, which had been published about six years before. "Much as I admire these sonnets," he proceeded, "and I do assure you I think very highly of many of them in a poetical light, I cannot with any certainty ascertain to whom they are addressed. The point has puzzled sorely both myself and Helen; her curiosity, indeed, is particularly alive on the occasion, and as I promised her to interrogate you on the subject the first favourable opportunity, I left the volume on the table as a memento for that purpose; but I will now, with your permission, call her in, that she may, if you feel no repugnancy to the disclosure, hear the secret from your own lips."

"And so, my fair Helen," cried the poet jocosely, as she re-entered the room with her father, "you are determined, I find, to bring me to confession. I am afraid, however, the dis-

covery will be accompanied with some disappointment, when I tell you that, with the exception of about thirty sonnets at the close of the collection, the rest, amounting to more than one hundred, are dedicated to my dearest friend, and earliest patron, my Lord Southampton."

"There, Helen," exclaimed Montchensey, with an air of triumph, "did I not tell you that if to any person more than another these sonnets might be conjectured to have a reference, his Lordship had the best claim?"

"It is very true, my father," answered Helen, who had by this time recovered her spirits, "but I trust, notwithstanding, Master Shakspeare will allow me to enquire, why the first seventeen of these little poems should be employed as dissuasives against a premature vow of celibacy, when we all know that Lord Southampton married, and at the age of five and twenty, the object of his first attachment, Elizabeth Vernon?"

"You will recollect," said the poet, "that this connection was begun without the knowledge of the Queen, about whose person Lord Southampton then was; that as soon as she dis-

covered it, she became extremely irritated, and, in fact, issued her mandate against the union. Indignant at this unjustifiable interference, it cannot be a matter of surprise that Southampton, who was then but just of age, and ardent in his disposition, should declare, in the phrensy of disappointed passion, that if he married not Elizabeth Vernon, he would die a bachelor. It was shortly after this period, at a time when the wished-for union seemed hopeless, without incurring disgrace at court, and when some of his friends, and myself amongst the number, were desirous both of combating this hasty resolution of celibacy, and of fixing his affections elsewhere, that these early sonnets were written."

"Excuse me, my dear Sir," replied Helen, "if I venture to ask, why, under such circumstances, you have dropped not the smallest allusion in these little poems, which might lead to a knowledge of the individual you were addressing, — not a word as to the wounded feelings or disappointed hopes of his lordship; but, confining yourself to a general reprobation of celibacy, left the peculiar object of your anxiety

to be detected, as in my father's instance, only by a subtile comparison of passages scattered through a numerous and succeeding series of sonnets?"

"I cannot but feel honoured, my fair hostess," returned the bard, "by the attention which you and your worthy father have paid to these trifles, and will freely confess, in reply to your question, that prudential motives alone induced the obscurity of which you complain. I was then but just rising into public notice; and had these Sonnets, which were extensively circulated in manuscript, as well among the friends of Lord Southampton as my own, ever reached the Queen, as in the slightest manner reflecting on her conduct by sympathising with the injuries of the Earl, the consequence might have been not only ruinous to myself, but, as I then thought, highly prejudicial to my friend. I, therefore, found it necessary, avoiding all direct application to his lordship, to restrict myself to a more general invective against the resolution he had formed, despairing, as he then did, of ever possessing the object of his affections, well knowing that

he for whom they were intended would understand me. Need I add, that within little more than four years from the commencement of this amour, the impetuosity of the Earl, breaking through all restraint, set the Queen at defiance by marrying his mistress?—a daring which I had not even ventured to contemplate, and which, as your father may recollect, was followed by the temporary imprisonment of both the parties.”

“ I must say,” observed Montchensey, anticipating the remark of Helen, “ that you have, in my opinion, sufficiently accounted for the obscurity which hangs over this part of your early poetry ; but pardon my observing further, that one of the principal obstacles I had to encounter, in cherishing my belief of Lord Southampton being the object you had in view, arose from the terms of familiarity with which you addressed him, and on a topic, too, which required the utmost delicacy of management. Now, considering the great disparity of rank which subsisted between you and your patron, it seemed difficult to conceive that you would venture, or that he would suffer you, ‘ to re-

monstrate with him on a topic which an equal would scarcely have found himself at liberty to touch upon.'” *

“It may, I think, be very justly remarked, Master Montchensey,” rejoined Shakspeare, “that oftentimes many things are endured from an inferior which would not be tolerated in an equal; and more especially is this the case with spirits jealous and quick in resentment, though full of honourable bearing. It is well known, that my Lord Southampton, with a heart alive to every kind and generous feeling, possesses a constitutional warmth and irritability of temper, and an independency of spirit, which brook not the interference of one on his own level, and that what he would not submit to listen to from a Rutland or Montgomery, he would receive with kind and patient consideration from a favourite in humbler life. It is also equally well known that his love for literature, and especially for dramatic literature, is warm, and even enthusiastic: and you compel me to add, that his partiality for myself, however little merited,

* Vide Malone's Shakspeare, apud Boswell, vol. xx. p. 219.

and his patronage of my efforts, however unworthy of such distinction in the eyes of others, have been, ever since my dedication to him of the Venus and Adonis, unparalleled, and, indeed, without bound. Will not all this, my good friend, prove a satisfactory solution of the difficulty which has startled you?"

"I allow it to be so, Master Shakspeare," answered his host, "but I have not done with your little volume yet; for, in the name of wonder, what are we to think of the last twenty-eight sonnets? You have here dropped your noble patron to address one, who is, even on your own confession, the most worthless of womankind. Had I not been assured, from universal report, of the purity of your moral character, I freely confess to you, that I should have condemned these pieces as the production of an unblushing profligate!"

"Most sincerely do I wish, Master Montchensey," rejoined the poet, "that, since I find them open to such misconstruction, they had never seen the light! But you will believe me, I have no doubt, when I say, that these sonnets, though apparently written in my own per-

son, are strictly ideal, and were intended solely to express, aloof from all individual application, the contrarieties, the inconsistencies, and the miseries of illicit love."

"It is impossible to know you, my friend, and to think otherwise," said Montchensey; "but as this personal knowledge is necessarily confined to a few, I cannot help wishing either that they had not been published, or that some intimation had been given of the nature of their origin."

"If I live, Master Montchensey, it shall be done," cried the bard. "Indeed," he continued, "had it not been for the urgent solicitations of a dear friend of mine, now no more, neither these sonnets, nor the greater part of those which precede them, had come forth; but he wrung from me a reluctant consent, and, having obtained the manuscript, immediately placed it in the hands of Thorpe, whence the edition now lying on your table." *

* Mr. Boswell having endeavoured, in the twentieth volume of "Malone's Shakspeare," p. 218. *et seq.*, to set aside the hypothesis which I started in my "Shakspeare and his Times," of Lord Southampton being the object to which the poet addressed the great body of his Sonnets, an hypothesis which, as

Here all further conversation on this topic was interrupted by the arrival of visitors from a neighbouring seat; for as the hour of dinner, as we have already stated, was, with families of distinction at this period, seldom later than twelve o'clock, morning calls were, of course, proportionally early. Discussion, however, not only on this subject, but on many others connected with the poetry and dramatic literature of the age, was frequently resumed at Wyeburne Hall; for both Montchensey and his daughter delighted, above all things, to listen to their illustrious guest, whenever they could happily engage him on topics connected either with his own history or that of his fascinating art. Indeed, nothing could be more gratifying to Shakspeare than the manner in which he spent his time beneath this hospitable roof; for he had here a choice as well as extensive library, a country rich in romantic beauties, and

he says, "some of my readers have considered as established," I have, in this imaginary conversation, replied to his objections, and, if I do not, indeed, very materially deceive myself, placed their want of force and applicability in a satisfactory point of view.

the society of those who, anticipating the admiration of a distant age, thoroughly understood and valued his incomparable genius. Nor could he fail to be deeply interested in all that concerned the wayward fate and history of Hubert Gray, more particularly as he found them indissolubly connected with the peace and happiness of Helen Montchensey, for whom, owing to the sweetness of her disposition, and the singular brilliancy of her understanding, he entertained the most affectionate regard. The mystery, too, which seemed to hang over the life, and press upon the feelings, of Eustace Montchensey, and the amiable yet very extraordinary character of that fine old man, Simon Fraser, closely mingled, as they appeared to be, with the fortunes of the younger parties, had a considerable share in exciting and keeping up an anxious curiosity.

It may readily be conceived, therefore, that in accordance with his promise to Montchensey, he lost little time in commencing some enquiry which might, he thought, lead to a detection of the present circumstances and occupation of Hubert Gray, trusting that through a know-

ledge of these he should eventually obtain a clue to the acquisition of his birth and origin; information which, while it seemed necessary as a precursory step to the happiness of the young people, might possibly throw some light upon, or at least contribute to disperse the melancholy which preyed upon the spirits of his friendly host. The only channel, however, through which at present he could hope for any success, seemed to lie in the person of poor Morley, who, from what had occurred that morning, must, there was every reason to believe, have made an appointment with Hubert Gray. From him, therefore, when they next met, he tried, by every sifting means, to procure the information he was in search of; but, though he soon discovered that he had really been with this young man at the time Montchensey had suspected, yet, whether from sheer ignorance, or, what is more likely, from mere cunning, on the part of Morley, he could obtain nothing further than that he, Hubert, had asked for Master Shakespeare, saying that he knew him well, and had something of importance to communicate to him. This was, however, a piece of intelligence

which, if not immediately satisfactory as to the main object he had in pursuit, might ultimately tend to forward his views, though he could not help feeling surprised at the claim on his acquaintance which the youth had made, unconscious as he was of ever having known such a being as Hubert Gray had been described to him.

It was not, indeed, until near a fortnight after this conversation with Morley, during which period he had repeatedly, though in vain, visited the cottage of Simon Fraser, for the purpose of seeking information, that any thing occurred which could, in the slightest degree, gratify his wishes on the subject, when, one evening, as he was strolling on the banks of the Wye, and, tempted by the more than usual splendour of a rich and glowing heaven, had prolonged his walk beyond its usual limits, he was suddenly thrown by the abrupt winding of the stream, on a scene of matchless beauty and seclusion. The Wye here descending by a successive series of falls, into the bosom of a deep glen, flowed, as it reached the bottom, through banks which were on each side skirted with the most delicious

verdure, and spread out into a very irregular, though somewhat circular, little valley. It was a spot, indeed, where Nature seemed to have accumulated, in a small compass, many of her most attractive features ; for on the left, looking down the current of the river, there arose a screen of the richest wood, and which, springing from the shelves of a high and precipitous cliff, seemed to tower into the clouds ; whilst opposite, on the right, and at the foot of a fantastic pile of rocks, beautifully clothed with shrubs and flowers, appeared the mouth of a cavern or grotto, from which the greensward gently sloped for some hundred feet, to where an aged oak, standing solitary near the bank of the Wye, threw its gigantic arms almost athwart its stream.

Absorbed in the musings which this scene of sequestered solitude was calculated to inspire, it was some time before Shakspeare perceived that it had, at least, one human tenant. All seemed loneliness and silence, save when the gentle murmurings of the water-falls, or the gale of evening, as it whispered through the foliage, just broke upon the ear. If, thought the bard,

the spirit of peace were ever dependent on the beautiful repose of nature, this might be the blessed spot; a reflection which had scarcely struck his mind, when the sun, darting from beneath the illumined edge of a cloud, flung a golden light along the valley, and gleaming on the dark branches of the oak we have described, he could discern, as they caught the passing splendour of the beam, the figure of a man resting beneath their shade.

This was a discovery which, circumstanced as he then was, immediately interested the feelings of Shakspeare, and descending, therefore, a rude path which lay by the side of the Wye, and taking, as he reached the bottom of the falls, a somewhat circuitous course, he approached, without being seen, the object of his curiosity. It was, indeed, with no slight sensations of anxiety and hope that, perceiving, as he drew near, the form to be that of a young person, he flattered himself this might be the very identical being he was in search of, the unfortunate and self-banished Hubert Gray; an expectation which seemed the more probable, as there appeared to be something in the garb

and figure of the stranger beyond the common level. He was reclining on the turf against one of the massive roots of the oak which bulged considerably above the surface of the ground, and gazing, with an expression of awful anguish in his countenance, on the glories of the sinking day. "How beautiful, how majestic," he exclaimed aloud, "is yonder setting sun! It is thus the good and great descend into the grave, and hallowed is their bed of rest."

"It is, indeed, a vision of surpassing glory, my young friend, a noble lesson for the heart of man!" almost unconsciously replied the poet to the touching soliloquy of the stranger.

The youth started as he spoke, and springing on his feet, the word "Shakspeare," involuntarily escaped his lips. "It is even so, young man," returned the poet, steadfastly regarding him as the sun-beams lighted up his expressive features, "and, if I do not err, I may claim some knowledge of you too, as the minstrel whom I saw last Midsummer Eve beneath my roof at Stratford!" "The same, the same," replied the youth, whilst the hectic of a moment seemed to flush his cheeks; "and in that

minstrel," continued Shakspeare, "do I not address him whom these valleys know by the name of Hubert Gray?"

"I answer to that hapless name," was the reply of Hubert Gray, "and to one too," he added, hastily approaching the bard, and grasping him convulsively by the hand, "for which you will, perchance, feel less compassion; to that," and he paused for a few seconds, "to that of Roland the freebooter!"

"It is then as I feared," cried Shakspeare, involuntarily shrinking from the side of his companion, "and yet how can it be, how is it probable, that the robber Roland, whose skin was swarthier than the gipsy's hue, and whose locks were dark as the raven's wing, can thus be changed into a light-haired, fair-complexioned youth?"

"Art, and the necessity for concealment," rejoined Hubert with a bitter smile, "will readily account for this; and so effectual, indeed, has been the estrangement, that hitherto, under the common precaution of not suffering the leader of banditti to be seen in the broad glare of day-light, scarcely has the identity of

Roland and of Hubert Gray been once suspected. To you only, beyond the pale of my sworn brotherhood, have I now committed the secret, anxious to exculpate myself, if possible, to one whom I have been long taught to admire, and whose influence with those whom yet I most love may, when the fate of Hubert shall have been decided, no distant date, perhaps, best extenuate his follies and his crimes."

"Alas! alas! young man," exclaimed the astonished bard, "what could induce you thus to plunge into a course which at once deprives you of the countenance and support of all good men, and renders you, at the same time, amenable to the violated laws of your country? Were there none whose good opinion you were desirous to maintain, none to whom duty, love, or friendship, should have bound you by ties alike hallowed and endeared?"

"I am a very wretch," replied the youth, deeply agitated as he spoke, "forsaken by those who gave me birth, disowned, cast off, — left to be a burthen on the gray hairs of him who fostered my childhood, and, what is worst of all, contemned, despised without a cause, where

I had garnered up my every hope, by the very individuals on whom I had learned to build my little world of happiness ! It was this, my friend, for allow me, though but for a moment, to call you by that name, it was this last stroke, that, laying desolate as by an instant shock, all that I had fondly cherished, drove me, reckless of what might follow, from the cottage of my youth, to become the companion, and at length the leader of the lawless beings with whom you lately found me. See you not my friend," he added, pointing to the western heavens, " that scene of glory, yonder setting sun ? What golden vales, what worlds of splendour seem to open round him ; regions of everlasting bliss, abodes of love and virtue ! Yes, bright as ye glow before me, ye mansions of the beautiful, there was a time when earth itself presented to my view visions of scarce less delight, when peace and hope dwelt with me, and she to whom my dreams of paradise were raised, the innocent, the lovely Helen, smiled on them till they kindled into life, till they seemed to burn with hues undying as your own ! But now, degraded and abandoned, whither shall I turn ?

Oh ! that I could resume once more the innocence of my childhood ! that I hung an infant on my mother's breast ! or, that ceasing this instant to be, I could sink into the grave unconscious and forgotten !”

Against such a burst of agony and remorse, few could have stood unmoved, and we may easily imagine, therefore, that on Shakspeare, whose heart was ever open to all the finest feelings of humanity, the effect became, in a more than common degree, powerful and durable. There was, indeed, in the character of Hubert Gray, as it now developed itself, much that was calculated to call forth and gratify his closest scrutiny. It had, in fact, greatly interested him when first sketched in the light but glowing touches of Helen and of Simon Fraser ; but of the *identity* of *Roland* and of *Hubert Gray*, he had then entertained not the smallest suspicion. Subsequent circumstances, however, and especially his conversations with Montchensey and Morley, had led to a momentary apprehension of the fact ; but it had been almost as instantly dismissed, as too wild and romantic for credibility ; nor could any thing, perhaps, but the

avowal he had just heard, have banished his incredulity, so great was the disparity, as well in manner as in appearance, between the two seeming individuals. He had now, however, the full truth before him, and if in *Roland* he had viewed with admiration the daring energy of the freebooter, the skill with which, young as he was, he had controlled the pitiless and indiscriminate plunder of his associates, and the singular courtesy of his demeanour, in *Hubert* he beheld with augmenting wonder and delight, with a mingled emotion, indeed, of the purest pity and esteem, the gentle and ingenuous child of sorrow and misfortune; one, who from his very peculiar and trying situation had become a victim to the delicacy and intensity of his feelings, and who was now, implicated as he felt himself to be with the lawless and proscribed, and deserted, as he thought, by all whom best he loved, a prey to unceasing self-upbraiding and despair.

There was also another circumstance which had its share in sustaining the very deep interest which Shakspeare felt for this unfortunate youth; for he beheld in his features, as they were now

casually illumined by the last rays of the setting sun, a very striking resemblance to one of his earliest and dearest friends, a descendant of the house of Neville, and who had been for many years a compulsory exile from his native country, and of whose history, or even existence, he had long lost any certain knowledge.

It was, therefore, with feelings almost parental, and with a look and voice, indeed, which bespoke the sincerest compassion, that he now addressed his suffering companion. "My Hubert," he said, "for by this endearing term your misfortunes entitle me to call you, I will henceforth be your friend, and, if you will permit me, your counsellor and guide!"

Tears of uncontrollable gratitude gushed into the eyes of Hubert, and he was about to throw himself at the feet of Shakspeare. "Nay, kneel not to me, dear youth," exclaimed the pitying bard, "a being frail and transient as yourself, but turn with humble resignation to Him who made yon glorious orb now sinking from our view. Go, ask of Him, my son, a contrite and a peaceful spirit; for it is to the impetuosity and pride of passion, to the re-

pinings of a heated imagination, to the keenness of an unregulated sensibility, that you are now the thing you dread to look upon. A time there has been, Hubert, when I have partly felt what now you feel, and, if I err not in the estimation of your nature, a time there will be, my young friend, when peace and hope shall once more shed their blessings on you."

"Oh, my friend! my father I may justly call you," replied the agitated youth, "can there be peace for one so wretched and so lost as I am?"

"There can, there is, my son," rejoined the bard, "provided you will listen to the promptings of dispassionate reason, to the suggestions of your better self, to the dictates of your conscience and your God! Believe me, Hubert, had you but been duly grateful for the blessings that were round you, what now you have to suffer and to fear could not have happened. It is true, the want of acknowledgment on the part of your parents, and, above all, your ignorance of their very being, is a great and serious evil; but, recollect, my son, that they have not altogether deserted you; they have placed you in

the hands of one who loves you as a father, who has had the desire, and, through them, the means, of giving you an excellent education; nor when, by some casualty, no doubt, your pecuniary resources failed, should you, actuated, as I must think, by a false notion of independency, though mingled with a tenderer feeling, have contemned the assistance of one to whom you were not only very dear, but bound as if by the ties of paternity. You have also enjoyed, in the society of the Montchenseys, those who knew your worth and prized your talents, and who, albeit acquainted with the obscurity which clouds your birth and parentage, have received you on terms of almost perfect equality; and if some coolness did at length take place on the part of Montchensity himself, could *you* wonder at the cause? I blame not your attachment, my son; for to have been long the companion and the favourite of Helen Montchensity, and not to have loved her, would have shown a heart alike insensible to goodness and to beauty; but you should not, at the same time, have been unmindful of the feelings of a father, you should not have forgotten your own

peculiar circumstances, and how few, situated as my friend Eustace is, could bear to think upon an union with one of unavowed, and, therefore, unknown origin; nor should you, in the bitterness of disappointment, have doubted the affection of her whose filial love and duty would alone account for what you have unjustly placed to coolness and caprice."

"And is there, then, my best of friends," interrupted the impetuous youth, his features flushing with delight, "is there then a chance, a hope for me, that Helen still cherishes in her breast one thought of Hubert Gray?" And then, suddenly reverting to his forlorn and desperate situation, he exclaimed, whilst his countenance assumed an expression of the deepest anguish, "Oh! fool that I was to doubt her tenderness and truth!—to rush headlong into misery and crime! Whither, shackled as I now am, the companion of outlaws and of robbers, an object of fear and execration, oh! whither shall I turn?"

As he said this, he threw himself on the ground in a paroxysm of grief, whilst Shakespeare, after waiting for a few moments, until

the first ebullitions of passion had subsided, again addressed him: "Suffer not, my son, I pray you," cried the compassionate bard, melted even unto tears by what he witnessed, "suffer not these too agonising feelings to overwhelm your powers of mind. As far as they may lead to other and to better views, I would not wish to repress them; but this excess of self-reproach can only point the path to horror and despair. Rise, my son, and listen to me, for my heart yearns to save you from the gulph which seems ready to open at your feet."

There was, in the tone and manner with which these words were accompanied, such an evidence of earnestness and kindly sympathy, as irresistibly to soothe and calm the tumult which was struggling in the breast of Hubert. He rose and approached his monitor, under an impression of love and admiration, such as he had never felt before for any human being. "See, my son," resumed the poet, taking him affectionately by the hand, "how all things lie hushed around us! This vale, so green, so beautiful, — these waters lapsing with a flow scarce audible, — seem they not the chosen

haunts of virtue and repose? Oh, let the soft infection touch your soul!"

"It shall, it does, my noble friend," replied the youth, strongly affected. "Then hear me, Hubert," returned the bard: "erring and guilty as you have been, in leaguering yourself with those men of violence, you have yet a strong plea for mercy and for pardon, since, as I understand, the whole neighbourhood confesses that to Roland is to be attributed that forbearance and humanity which, contrary to their former habits, these men have lately shown. On this foundation, provided you will instantly break off all connection with them, I will pledge myself to obtain for you, from our gracious sovereign, a full and unreserved amnesty for what has passed."

"I feel the obligation at my heart," cried Hubert, deeply moved by the extraordinary benevolence of the offer; "but never, never shall it be said of Hubert Gray, that he saved his life at the expense of his associates! No, my friend, your kindness, — and words are wanting to express my sense of it, — must be in vain; for unless those to whom I have sworn to be

faithful can be partakers of the mercy extended to myself, we live and die together !”

“ They shall be pleaded for, my son,” rejoined the poet : “ I will accept of your conditions ; for am I not, in fact, indebted to those who could so promptly act up to your wishes, — who could spare the gentle bard, in deference to the muse he loved !”

“ But will the boon you proffer me, most generous of men,” replied the youth, relapsing into deep despondency, — “ will life itself be worth preserving, unless I may aspire to that which alone can render it desirable ? — unless, owned by those who gave me being, I shall be sanctioned to address the heart on which my happiness depends ? Oh ! pardon me ; but I had rather spill my life-blood on the rocks of M——ton dale, and die the death of Roland, the freebooter, than be the thing I was, contemned, neglected, and forgotten !”

“ You are wrong, you are greatly wrong, young man,” answered Shakspeare, somewhat hurt and offended by this sudden burst of uncontrolled emotion. “ Can it be that you have so soon forgotten those better thoughts, those

feelings of compunction and remorse, which lately agitated your bosom? Remember, that as Hubert Gray, you were more sinned against than sinning; but can this be said of Roland the freebooter? Return, then, once more, my son, unto this vale of peace; again gladden the heart of him to whom you owe so much, the good old Simon Fraser; and trust me when I say, no effort on my part shall be wanting in your behalf with your former friends at Wyeburne Hall. Indeed, so strongly, both in person and manner, do you resemble, Hubert, one who was peculiarly dear to me, and who may, for aught I know, be yet living, though in a foreign land, that I do not absolutely despair of being able to discover some traces of your family and lineage."

This was an intimation which seemed to strike upon every fibre of the heart of Hubert, and for some moments he appeared to be overcome by the intensity of his feelings. "Tell me," he at length exclaimed, in a voice scarcely articulate, "O tell me who are my parents, to whom I owe my being!"

"Nay, check this transport, my son," re-

plied Shakspeare, somewhat alarmed by the extreme energy of his manner; "perhaps I have already gone too far in intimating what I have done; for it has been solely on the ground of resemblance that the hope is suggested to my mind. More I cannot say at present; but rest assured, that the interest which is now awakened in my breast on the subject shall not sleep; I will make every possible enquiry, and, in the meantime, allow me to hope that when we next meet it may be in the cottage of Simon Fraser."

"It shall, it shall," replied Hubert, with emphatic tenderness; "I will again see that once happy roof; but my visits, for the present, must be short and seldom. I must rejoin my comrades by to-morrow's dawn; I must gradually prepare them for the mercy which you meditate; I must share their fate for evil or for good. Yes, strange as it may appear to you, my generous benefactor, it will require all my influence with these men, to induce them again to submit to the restrictions of civilisation,—to receive, long as they have been accustomed to a state of lawless independency, the pardon with

chosen leader, to accept w
not participate, or should
destruction, and that, I ha
connected with me, woul
result."

" I believe you are right
the bard, " nor will I inter
of carrying our wishes into
let me ask you, ere we pa
head for the night, for you
of not rejoining your band u

" Behold yon cavern," I
the excavation which we ha
as visible on one side of the
I occasionally fly from consci
Whilst my steed is grazing
couch of leaves is there, and
in solitude, on the banks o
has witnessed the innocenc
and my early youth, I lov

“Farewell! my Hubert,” cried Shakspeare, strongly affected by what he had just heard, “farewell! I will not forget you. Nor do you fail to revisit, as you have promised, the cottage of our friend at Wyeburne. Through him you shall hear from me, and beneath his roof it will not be long, I trust, before we meet again!”

As he said this he kindly pressed the hand of the unfortunate youth, whose heart, however, was too oppressed for utterance. The bard then turned to retrace his steps to Wyeburne Hall, and Hubert, overwhelmed by the conflict of his own emotions, rushed into the deepest recesses of his cavern.

(To be continued.)

No. XIII.

In this path,
How long soe'er the wanderer roves, each step
Shall wake fresh beauties ; each short point present
A different picture, new, and yet the same.

MASON.

THE second book of the Gardens of De Lille is entirely occupied by the subject of plantations, the most important part, perhaps, in the creation of landscape scenery ; as upon this, in a great measure, depend the richness and variety of the views, and the happy disposition of light and shade. After commenting, therefore, on the grace and grandeur, the elegance and majesty, to be derived from the growth of forest trees, even in their insulated state, the poet passes on to a consideration of the diversity, sublimity, and beauty, springing from their natural or artificial combination, under the shape of forest, group, or plantation, terminating his picture

with a further encomium on the picturesque effect so frequently resulting from the form and situation of a single tree, and especially from the solitary grandeur of an ancient oak :

Tantôt un bois profond, sauvage, ténébreux,
Epanche une ombre immense ; et tantôt moins
nombreux,

Un plant d'arbres choisis forme un riant bocage ;
Plus loin, distribués dans un frais paysage,
Des groupes élégans frappent l'œil enchanté :
Ailleurs, se confiant à sa propre beauté,
Un arbre seul se montre, et seul orne la terre. —

Dans les jardins de l'art, notre luxe autrefois
Des arbres isolés dédaignoit la parure :
Ils plaisent aujourd'hui dans ceux de la nature.
Par un caprice heureux, par de savans hasards,
Leurs plants désordonnés charmeront nos regards.
Qu'ils diffèrent d'aspect, de forme, de distance ;
Que toujours la grandeur, ou du moins l'élégance,
Distingue chaque tige, ou que l'arbre honteux
Se cache dans la foule et disparoisse aux yeux.
Mais lorsqu'un chêne antique, ou lorsqu'un vieil
érable,
Patriarche des bois, lève un front vénérable,

Que toute sa tribu, se rangeant à l'entour,
 S'écarte avec respect, et compose sa cour ;
 Ainsi, l'arbre isolé plait aux champs qu'il décore.

Chant 2.

The forest there immense, a black profound
 Of savage gloom, frowns more than midnight round :
 Here choicer trees array the laughing glade,
 And weave around a gently-glimm'ring shade :
 There scatter'd groups arise at distance due,
 Adorn the vale, and fix the raptur'd view :
 A single tree here bids her boughs expand,
 While lonely beauty decks the subject land. —

Erst art in gardens trim disdain'd to see
 The simple beauties of a lonely tree :
 But Nature owns them, and they win applause :
 For various trees are sway'd by various laws,
 And tho' caprice or chance may bid them grow,
 Ev'n from their wild confusion grace may flow.
 Then mark with care their distance, form, and hue,
 Whose dignity or grace may charm the view.
 And lest the shapeless trunk may hurt the eye,
 Hide in deep shades its foul deformity.
 But O respect the patriarch oak, whose brow
 Sublime o'erlooks the stripling tribe below !
 And where his grandeur tow'rs the shades between,
 There open wide around the sylvan scene ;

High o'er the filial circle let him reign,
And spread new glories o'er the smiling plain.

I have brought forward this passage with the view of showing with what skill and precision the anonymous translator has been able to render the more didactic parts of his undertaking. Simplicity, harmony, and perspicuity characterise these lines, and, as in the French poem, they rise into energy, and almost into sublimity, towards the close. They may be said, indeed, to equal, if they do not surpass their original.

In reading *De Lille* with a reference to the nearly simultaneous and sister production of his brother bard, the pathetic *Mason*, many parallelisms, it is obvious, must necessarily be detected, and, certainly, considering the circumstances under which the two works were composed, without exciting any wellfounded suspicions of plagiarism. It happens that the extract I have now given affords us an instance of the kind; for *Mason*, whilst describing the ancient vista, the "long cathedral isle of shade," and whilst condemning it to be broken up, though its "spreading oaks"

Have pair'd for centuries, and heard the strains
Of SIDNEYS, nay, perchance, of SURRY'S reed,

pauses, as he might justly do, with deep reluctance over the sentence, and partially rescinds it, indeed, in the following beautiful lines, whose resemblance to the terminating couplets of the quotation from De Lille, cannot but be considered as very striking. The English bard, after lamenting the failure of every other plan to break the formal line, calls for the axe, yet adds as he does it,

Trust me, tho' I bid thee strike,
Reluctantly I bid thee: for my soul
Holds dear an antient oak, nothing more dear;
It is an antient friend. Stay then thine hand;
And try by saplings tall, discreetly plac'd
Before, between, behind, in scatter'd groups,
To break the obdurate line. So mayst thou save
A chosen few; and yet, alas, but few
Of these, the old protectors of the plain.
Yet shall these few give to thy opening lawn
That shadowy pomp, which only they can give:
For parted now, in patriarchal pride,
Each tree becomes the father of a tribe;

And, o'er the stripling foliage, rising round,
Towers with parental dignity supreme.

Book i. l. 333.

Having adduced this specimen of the manner in which our anonymous translator has kept pace with the *didactic* spirit of his author, I now hasten with renewed pleasure to resume that series of quotations whose object is to prove with what occasional felicity the more vigorous and imaginative parts of the French poem have been sustained. The passage, indeed, which I am about to produce is (with the exception of two or three comparatively weak lines) one of that number which, in my opinion, has not only rivalled, but surpassed the original in the energy of its versification, and the poetical tone of its expression.

The Gallic bard has been giving directions for the formation of groups, and he then proceeds to shew, how far even woods and forests can be indebted to the judicious interference of art, employed, as it may be, to diversify their aspects and to soften their more rugged features, without, at the same time, breaking in upon the unity

and simple grandeur of their scenery. The subject opens with a forcible and highly-animated apostrophe.

Bois augustes, salut ! Vos voûtes poétiques
 N'entendent plus le Barde et ses affreux cantiques ;
 Un délire plus doux habite vos déserts ;
 Et vos antres encore nous instruisent en vers.
 Vous inspirez les miens, ombres majestueuses !
 Souffrez donc qu'aujourd'hui mes mains respec-
 tueuses

Viennent vous embellir, mais sans vous profaner ;
 C'est de vous que je veux apprendre à vous orner.

Les bois peuvent s'offrir sous des aspects sans
 nombre :

Ici des troncs pressés rembruniront leur ombre :
 Là, de quelques rayons égayant ce séjour,
 Formez un doux combat de la nuit et du jour.
 Plus loin, marquant le sol de leurs feuilles légères,
 Quelques arbres épars jouerent dans les clairières,
 Et flottant l'un vers l'autre, et n'osant se toucher,
 Paroîtront à la fois se fuir et se chercher.
 Ainsi le bois par vous perd sa rudesse austère :
 Mais n'en détruisez pas le grave caractère.
 De détails trop fréquens, d'objets minutieux,
 N'allez pas découper son ensemble à nos yeux.

Qu'il soit un, simple et grand, et que votre art lui
laisse,

Avec toute sa pompe, un peu de sa rudesse.
Montrez ces troncs brisés ; je veux de noirs torrens
Dans les creux des ravins suivre les flots errans.
Du tems, des eaux, de l'air n'effacez point la trace,
De ces rochers pendans respectez la menace,
Et qu'enfin dans ces lieux empreints de majesté
Tout respire une mâle et sauvage beauté.

Chant 2.

Hail holy haunts ! no more your vaults among
The wild-eyed bard resounds his hideous song ;
Now 'mid your caves a milder spirit dwells,
And inspiration breathes from all your cells ;
Majestic groves ! you now exalt his strain,
Whose hands shall ne'er your sacred gloom profane,
From you with reverence he'll learn to trace
The strong expression that your shades may grace.

Unnumber'd aspects may the forest own ;
Here the thick trunks the gloomy bow'rs imbrown.
There glances thro' the shade a smiling ray,
And doubtful darkness strives with glimm'ring day.
A shower of silv'ry light there strews the ground,
While the leaves fling a trembling shade around.
Now waving trees with sportive summits meet,
Now from each other coyly they retreat.

Thus shall the forest lose its frown severe,
But, ah ! its solemn sacred gloom revere !
Let no weak parts the mighty whole destroy,
Nor the tir'd eyes with idle objects cloy.
Let it be one ; a plain majestic scene ;
And Nature grand and wild at once be seen !
Let time-worn trunks there frown, their thund'ring
roar

Thro' the rent rocks let headlong torrents pour ;
Of time, the storms, and floods each scar retain ;
Respect those rocks whose horrors threat the plain ;
And o'er the whole in all his savage pow'r,
Still let the bold majestic Genius low'r !
Such is the simple grandeur Nature loves,
And ever true to Nature, Taste approves.

Shortly after this passage the author makes a transition to the wanton havoc and desolation which luxury and extravagance have so frequently and so extensively wrought amongst the groves and woods of a once rich and picturesque domain, unmindful of the tardy operations of time, and forgetting that neither wealth nor power can anticipate the work of nature, and revive at will the violated shade. He more particularly points his invective against the

young and dissipated heir, who, without one trait of pity or remorse, resigns to the axe what his fathers had so highly cherished and revered; and he hastens to apostrophize those, who feel inclined to follow the ruinous example, in terms which, if poetry could make its way to hearts thus callous to all sympathy with some of the best associations of the human mind, might in all probability avert the fatal stroke. It is an appeal which, in sweetness, tenderness and moral feeling, rivals the pathetic strains of Moschus, and it is one which I am happy in being able to remark, has suffered no deterioration in passing through the hands of our anonymous translator: —

Ah! par ces bois sacrés, dont le feuillage sombre
Aux danses du hameau prêta souvent son ombre;
Par ces dômes touffus qui couvroient vos ayeux,
Profanes, respectez ces troncs religieux!
Et quand l'âge leur laisse une tige robuste,
Gardez-vous d'attenter à leur vieillesse auguste.
Trop tôt le jour viendra que ces bois languissans,
Pour céder leur empire à de plus jeunes plants,
Tomberont sous le fer, et de leur tête altière
Verront l'antique honneur flétri dans la poussière.—

Croissez, hâtes votre ombre, et repeuplez ces
champs,

Vous, jeunes arbrisseaux ; et vous, arbres mourans,
Consolez-vous. Témoins de la foiblesse humaine,
Vous avez vu périr et Corneille et Turenne :
Vous comptez cent printems, hélas ! et nos beaux
jours

S'envolent les premiers, s'envolent pour toujours. —
Heureux donc qui jouit d'un bois formé par l'âge ;
Mais plus heureux celui qui créa son bocage !
Ces arbres, dont le tems prépare la beauté,
Il dit comme Cyrus : " C'est moi qui les plantai."

Chant 2.

Oh ! by those shades, beneath whose ev'ning bow'rs
The village dancers tripp'd the frolic hours ;
By those deep tufts, that shroud your father's tombs,
Spare, ye profane, their venerable glooms !
'To violate their sacred age, beware,
Which e'en the awestruck hand of time doth spare.
Too soon, alas ! to fate their strength must yield,
Too soon shall younger trees usurp the field !
The axe will fall ; on earth's cold bosom laid,
Defiled with dust, their tresses fair shall fade. —
Ye saplins, rise, and crowd the empty space,
Ye dying trees, forgive your dire disgrace !

The fate of short-lived, hapless man recall,
For you have seen the brave, the learned fall ;
Corneille, Turenne, now sleep in dust ; on you
A hundred springs have shed their balmy dew ;
But man's best days, alas ! are soonest fled,
And those once gone, to ev'ry joy he's dead !
Bless'd is the man whose trees for years have stood :
More bless'd whose happier hands create a wood.
He cries with Cyrus, as their shades disclose,
" 'Twas I who planted all those stately rows."

One of the most pleasing characteristics, indeed, of the didactic poetry of De Lille, is the vein of pensive tenderness, and touching morality which pervades, endears, and hallows, as it were, almost every page. It is thus that on the topic of plantations, whilst inculcating precepts for the choice and distribution of tints, so as to call forth the most striking effects of harmony, variety, and contrast, he adverts to the many-coloured woods of Autumn in a strain of melancholy enthusiasm which must find an echo in every bosom that has learnt to feel for sorrow and for suffering. It is fortunately one of those passages to which all imaginable justice

has been done by our translator, who, as the reader will immediately perceive, has in one or two instances availed himself, with the happiest taste, of a very admirable sketch in the *Seasons* of our amiable Thomson.

Remarquez-les surtout, lorsque la pâle automne,
 Près de la voir flétrir, embellit sa couronne.
 Que de variété, que de pompe et d'éclat !
 Le pourpre, l'orange, l'opale, l'incarnat,
 De leurs riches couleurs étalent l'abondance.
 Hélas ! tout cet éclat marque leur décadence.
 Tel est le sort commun. Bientôt les Aquilons
 Des dépouilles des bois vont joncher les vallons ;
 De moment en moment la feuille sur la terre,
 En tombant, interrompt le rêveur solitaire.
 Mais ces ruines même ont pour moi des attraits.
 Là, si mon cœur nourrit quelques profonds regrets,
 Si quelque souvenir vient rouvrir ma blessure ;
 J'aime à mêler mon deuil au deuil de la nature.
 De ces bois desséchés, de ces rameaux flétris,
 Seul, errant, je me plais à fouler les débris.

Chant 2.

Mark too, what time in many-colour'd bow'rs,
 Pale Autumn wreathes his latest, loveliest flow'rs ;

The rich luxuriance mark of ev'ry view,
The mild and modest tint, the splendid hue,
The temper'd harmony of various shades !
Alas ! their beauty blooms at once and fades.
Such is the lot of all : and now each gale
Bleak-whistling robs the groves, and strews the vale ;
While oft, who strays beneath in pensive mood,
Starts at the leaf, that rustles from the wood.
But, ah ! my soul enjoys the dying year,
I drop the sadly-sympathizing tear,
When Nature mourns ; and in my woe-worn heart,
When memory probes some wound with double
smart,
Oh ! how I love the with'ring waste to tread,
When all the verdure of the year is fled !

From this sweet but sombre picture of the dying year, from the deep recesses of the forest, whose sea of foliage is sounding to the storm, our author turns with the happiest effect of contrast to luxuriate amid the blooming world of shrubs and flowers. He has managed the transition with the most delicate art, and to this skilful interchange and opposition of subject, which is kept up throughout the entire poem, much of the impressiveness and fascination of the work is to be attributed.

Nor has the translator failed to preserve this attractive feature of the original; for though, as hath been already observed, he often sinks beneath the grace and finish of his author in the more subdued and preceptive parts of the undertaking, yet he ever rises with him where the subject demands a more vigorous wing, and not seldom, indeed, has he surpassed him on such occasions, in the strength and elevation of his flight. It is worthy also of remark, that, as in these more striking parts of the original, where beauty happens to be the leading charm, the translator has exhibited a polish which rivals that of his author, we must ascribe to indolence, and not to want of power, his failure in so essential an article, where, perhaps, it is most required, the humbler, and less ornamented portion of the poem.

As a specimen of the harmony of diction, and grace of expression, with which our translator can embellish a favourite topic of this kind, his version of the passage just alluded to, on flowering shrubs, may be appositely quoted.

Venez peuple enchanteur !

Vous êtes la nuance entre l'arbre et la fleur ;
 De vos traits délicats venez orner la scène.
 Oh ! que si moins pressé du sujet qui m'entraîne,
 Vers le but qui m'attend je ne hâtois mes pas,
 Que j'aurois de plaisir à diriger vos bras !
 Je vous reproduirois sous cent formes fécondes ;
 Ma main sous vos berceaux feroit rouler les ondes ;
 En dômes, en lambris j'unirois vos rameaux ;
 Mollement enlacés autour de ces ormeaux,
 Vos bras serpenteroient sur leur robuste écorce,
 Emblème de la grâce unie avec la force. —

Pour vous, à qui le ciel prodigua leur richesse,
 Ménagez avec art leur pompe enchanteresse :
 Partagez aux saisons leurs brillantes faveurs ;
 Que chacun apportant ses parfums, ses couleurs,
 Reparoisse à son tour, et qu'au front de l'année,
 Sa guirlande de fleurs ne soit jamais fanée.
 Ainsi votre jardin varie avec le tems ;
 Tout mois a ses bosquets, tout bosquet son printemps.

Chant 2.

Ye gentle shades between the trees and flowers,
 With you, ye laughing race, I'll deck my bowers.
 O that my theme would grant the fond delay,
 Nor with too urgent haste forbid my stay !

With what delight my hands each spray should
 guide,
And teach your curling tendrils where to glide !
In woven bowers, and roofs, your shoots should
 grow,
And 'neath your network arch the riv'let flow ;
Around yon elm your wedded arms should wind,
Emblem of strength, with gentlest beauty join'd, —
 You then to whom their lovely pomp is giv'n,
Display with art these charming gifts of Heav'n ;
Let ev'ry season have their brilliant bloom,
Their laughing colours, and their rich perfume ;
Let each in turn the well-wrought chaplet wear,
Thus ne'er shall fade the garland of the year ;
But new-born joys shall every season bring,
Each month a bower, and ev'ry bower a spring.

The bard then proceeds to show how this glowing scene may be realized, even during the most rigorous season, by the creation of what has been termed a winter-garden, where the yew and the fir, the ivy, the holly, and the laurel, and many other trees and plants of a like hardy constitution, may be so tastefully cultivated and arranged, that nature shall call the work her own, although, by their assem-

blage, the severity of one portion of the year seems banished from the eye. A perfect fairy-land of this kind, he tells us, existed at Monceaux, the winter-garden of the Duc d'Orleans, where, in the language of our anonymous version, —

Enchanted grottoes rise, and magic bowers ;
There braves the rose the chilling waste of snow,
And 'mid the icy horrors learns to blow.
Seasons and climes to power superior yield,
And spring eternal decks the fairy field.

Yet whatever may be the beauty of the landscape, or the garden, which has been called into existence ; however taste and art may have united to render them the very impress of nature in her loveliest garb, unless sentiment and affection be associated with the scenery, all will soon cease to charm, through the mere influence of habit ; and whilst the stranger views the creation with delight, to the accustomed eye of the proprietor it has forgotten to suggest what may touch the heart, or fix his fond regard.

To prevent this apathy and sense of satiety,

the French poet very judiciously places before us the example of the Laplanders, asking, as he introduces the subject, —

N'est-il pas des moyens dont le charme secret
 Vous rende leur beauté toujours plus attachante ?
 Oh ! combien des Lapons l'usage heureux m'en-
 chante !

Qu'ils savent bien tromper leurs hivers rigoureux !
 Nos superbes tilleuls, nos ormeaux vigoureux !
 De ces champs ennemis redoutent la froidure :
 De quelques noirs sapins l'indigente verdure
 Par intervalle à peine y perce les frimats !
 Mais le moindre arbrisseau qu'épargent ces climats
 Par des charmes plus doux à leurs regards soit
 plaire ;

Planté pour un ami, pour un fils, pour un père,
 Pour un hôte qui part emportant leur regrets,
 Il en reçoit le nom, le nom cher à jamais.

Chant. ii.

Are there no charms whose secret springs might
 move ?

No lasting tie to wake their master's love ?

Behold, how Lapland's wiser offspring cheer
 The dreary horrors of their wintry year !

Our proudest oaks and elms refuse to dare
The fatal blasts that freeze their bitter air.
There, thinly scatter'd o'er their dreary coasts,
A few black firs scarce pierce the solid frosts.
But the least shrub those ice-bound climates spare,
Their love and fixed regard is sure to share.
Raised to a sire, a son ; or friend who bore
Their parting wishes to a distant shore ;
His name it bears, that name for ever dear,
And often claims the tributary tear.

After briefly noticing with what grace and sweetness the translator has preserved the pensive flow and tender sentiment of his original, I shall only further remark, that to associations of the kind here recommended, and to those likewise which spring from objects recalling to our thoughts the good and great of ages long gone by, we are often indebted for an interest more permanent and unpalling than can possibly be elicited from any other source within the field of landscape gardening. Much taste, however, and much delicacy are required, when passing beyond the mere consecration of the tree or grove, we raise the bust, the mausoleum, or the urn ; for the slightest idea of any thing obtrusive

or ostentatious, would at once dissipate the charm, and render what should call forth the sympathy of the passing stranger, an object to him of ridicule or disgust.

An episode commemorative of the birth of the Dauphin in 1781, immediately follows the passage I have just quoted, and the author then gradually and artfully slides into a brief notice of the pleasing art of improving flowers and fruits by cultivation, eulogising at the same time, those who have laid us under material obligation by importing the treasures of a distant shore. Among benefactors of this description he particularly singles out the Roman General Lucullus as the importer of the cherry from Armenia; an instance which suggesting to his recollection the warfare of the ancient Gauls with these once haughty masters of the world, he bursts forth into the following strain of patriotic exultation, which, as being one of those portions of the original to which the talents of the translator have been happily applied, I shall select for these pages.

— Ces mêmes Romains n'ont-ils pas vu nos pères,
En bataillons armés, sous des cieux plus prospères
Aller chercher la vigne, et vouer à Bacchus
Leurs étendards rougis du nectar des vaincus ?
Du fruit de leurs exploits leurs troupes échauffées
Rapportoient, en chantant, ces précieux trophées.
Du pampre triomphal ils couronnoient leurs fronts ;
Le pampre sur leurs dards s'enlaçoit en festons.
Tel revint sur son char le dieu vainqueur du Gange,
Les vallons, les coteaux célébroient la vendange ;
Et partout où coula le nectar enchanté,
Coururent le plaisir, l'audace et la gaieté.

Chant 2.

Did not those Romans feel our conquering arms,
When down our fathers rush'd in martial swarms ?
Invited by the smiles of happier skies,
They found the vine and bore away the prize.
Their standards, blushing with the purple stream,
To Bacchus they devote with loud acclaim ;
Warm with the rich reward of all their toils,
With hymns of joy, they bear along the spoils ;
Around their brows its garlands they entwine,
And from their spears depends the clustering vine.
Thus when returning from the Ganges' flood,
The hills and dales proclaim'd the conqu'ring god ;

The juice nectarious dy'd the thirsty ground,
And joy in merriest mood still ran around.

The poet then calls upon his countrymen to imitate the example of their remote ancestors, and as the sons of those adventurous Gauls, to bear away the rural spoils of every clime: —

All those that meet the op'ning eye of day,
And those that drink the sun's meridian ray,
All that his farthest west'ring beams behold,
Or scarce peep forth amidst eternal cold :

thus placing before the eye of the Parisian the vegetable products of the four quarters of the globe; an exhortation which introduces one of the most beautiful and affecting episodes to be found in didactic poetry. It is built on a circumstance which actually took place in one of the Botanic Gardens of France. "Potaveri," says M. De Lille, "was an inhabitant of Otaheite, brought over into France by the celebrated M. De Bougainville. — The anecdote here related is well known, and very interesting. I have only changed the scene, which I have

placed in the Royal Garden of-plants. I could have wished my verses had breathed all the sensibility of those few words which he pronounced as he embraced a tree, which he recollected to have seen at home, and which immediately recalled his country to his mind. 'C'est O-Taïti', 'this is Otaheite', cried he; and looking at the other trees, 'Ce n'est pas O-Taïti,' 'this is not Otaheite.' Thus this tree and his country were identified in his mind."

Well might De Lille doubt his powers of doing justice to the touching simplicity of this pathetic anecdote, for it may be justly said to speak the very language of the heart. It will be interesting however to ascertain how far the Frenchman and his translator have succeeded in their arduous attempt.

L'heureux étranger,
Des bords qu'il a quittés reconnoissant l'ombrage,
Doute de son exil à leur touchante image,
Et d'un doux souvenir sent son cœur attendri.

Je t'en prends à témoin jeune Potaveri.
Des champs d' O-Taïti, si chers à son enfance,
Où l'amour sans pudeur n'est pas sans innocence,

Ce sauvage ingénu, dans nos murs transporté,
Regrettoit dans son cœur sa douce liberté,
Et son île riante, et ses plaisirs faciles.
Ebloui, mais lassé de l'éclat de nos villes,
Souvent il s'écrioit : " Rendez-moi mes forêts."
Un jour, dans ces jardins où Louis à grands frais,
Des quatre points du monde et un seul lieu rassemble
Ces peuples végétaux surpris de croître ensemble,
Qui, changeant à la fois de saison et de lieu,
Viennent tous à l'envi rendre hommage à Jussieu.
L'Indien parcouroit leurs tribes réunies,
Quand tout à coup, parmi ces vertes colonies,
Un arbre qu'il connut dès ses plus jeunes ans,
Frappe ses yeux. Soudain, avec des cris perçans
Il s'élance, il l'embrasse, il le baigne de larmes,
Le couvre de baisers. Mille objets pleins de
charmes,
Ces beaux champs, ce beau ciel qui le virent
heureux,
Le fleuve qu'il fendoit de ses bras vigoureux,
La forêt dont ses traits perçoient l'hôte sauvage,
Ces bananiers chargés et de fruits et d'ombrage,
Et le toit paternel, et les bois d'alentour,
Ces bois qui répondoient à ses doux chants d'amour,
Il croit les voir encor, et son âme attendrie,
Du moins pour un instant, retrouva sa patrie.

Chant 2.

Haply the stranger views those shades again,
He once had lov'd upon another plain.
Awhile the welcome sight beguiles his woe,
At once the tears of joy and sorrow flow.

Thus far away along the billowy roar,
Seduc'd unweeting from his native shore,
Where, without guilt, without its blushing sense,
Ingenuous Nature loves with innocence,
The simple savage 'neath a colder sky,
In secret wept his wonted liberty ;
Wept his gay isle ; wept all its easy joys :
And though awhile delighted with our toys,
Society he found all new and rude,
And oft with sighs reclaim'd his native wood.
Till once reclin'd beneath the bloomy bow'r,
Where, all obedient to imperial pow'r,
Nature collects her vegetable stores,
As Jussieu calls them from her utmost shores ;
The artless mourner mark'd with wild surprise
A plant familiar to his infant eyes ;
The sudden sight inspires his heavy heart,
He runs, he flies, and all untaught in art,
With tears he clasps it to his beating breast,
And ev'ry sense with joy awhile is blest.
Again his home, his happy home he sees,
With all its simple life, its love and ease ;
The fair, the flow'ry banks, where oft he lay,
The cloudless skies that shed incessant day ;

Again in thought he stems the headlong flood,
Or fells the raging savage of the wood.
With shade and fruit sees rich bananas crown'd,
His father's cot, which bow'ring groves surround,
Groves which once echoed to his songs of love :
Beneath their shades again he seems to rove ;
His melting soul with visions fair expands,
And for a moment hails his native lands.

If any fault can be found with this affecting episode, it is that in the French poem both the language and the versification are somewhat too studied and embellished ; blemishes from which, in my opinion, the translation is in a great measure free ; for there is an ease, simplicity, and freedom, as well in the tone of its diction, as in the construction of its metre, much better suited to the unadorned and artless pathos of the original anecdote, than would be the most choice and happy elegance.

It is with this delightful episode on the love of country and of home, that the second book of the early copies of " Les Jardins, par M. L'Abbé De Lille," is terminated. In the recently augmented editions it is followed by

several pages of additional matter; yet I cannot help thinking that the close as it originally stood, and which is introduced with singular grace and propriety, must, from the pleasing and tender impression which it leaves on the mind, have a preference with all readers of taste.

It suggests, indeed, a train of emotions more dear and universally felt, perhaps, than any other which can agitate the human breast, for

The love of home, plant native of the soul,
Blooms at the line, nor withers near the pole *,

and is, therefore, admirably adapted to close a

* From "Home; a Poem." Second edition, Edinburgh, 1808; a production which, though unequal in its execution, contains many very beautiful passages on a very interesting subject. It opens with the following pleasing lines:—

Beloved Clydesdale! Thy green woods are sweet,
When Spring and Summer, wreathed with May-flowers, meet:
Sweet are thy swelling hills in light array'd,
Thy glens, the haunts of solitude and shade,
Thy streamlets gently murmuring, and the bloom
Showered on their winding banks; — but sweeter HOME.
Home! — There are pleasures undebas'd by art,
Endearments, where deception has no part,
Treasures that fortune is too poor to give:
Elsewhere I life endure; in home I truly live.

principal division of a poem, one of whose most valuable characteristics is the pathos of its moral feeling.

(To be continued.)

No. XIV.

Nemusculum "hoc in loco" est opacum, fontes limpidi et gemmei, antra muscosa, prata semper verna, "flores odoriferi," rivi levis et susurrans per saxa discursus, nec non solitudo, et quies Musis amicissima.

CAMDEN.

TURF, flowers, rocks, and water, form the pleasing subjects of the third book of the Gardens of De Lille, which, after a short exordium of rather too mythological a cast, alludes to the first of these constituents of the pleasure-ground, as of British introduction and culture, declaring that previous to our countrymen following, in this respect, the footsteps of free nature, the gardens of the continent were little better than a waste of barren sands, which burnt the foot and tired the aching eye. The acknowledgement is liberal and correct; for the beautiful and soothing repose of the closely mown lawn, forming so delightful a fore-ground,

when gradually, and, as it were, mysteriously losing itself amid the adjoining plantations, may be yet said to flourish best in our happy island. "There are," remarked Sir William Temple long ago, "besides the temper of our climate, two things particular to us, that contribute much to the beauty and elegance of our gardens, which are the gravel of our walks, and the fineness and almost perpetual greenness of our turf. The first is not known anywhere else, which leaves all their dry walks, in other countries, very unpleasant and uneasy. The other cannot be found in France or in Holland as we have it, the soil not admitting that fineness of blade in Holland, nor the sun that greenness in France, during most of the summer; nor indeed is it to be found but in the finest of our soils."

From this praise of the smoothly-shorn lawn, when properly diversified by the intermixture of wood and copse, the author hastens to another mode of producing variety by the aid of flowers, and he invokes the assistance of these beautiful children of nature in the following animated

apostrophe, which appears to have sustained no deterioration by assuming an English garb.

Simple tributs du cœur, vos dons sont chaque jour
 Offerts par l'amitié, hazardés par l'amour.
 D'embellir la beauté vous obtenez la gloire ;
 Le laurier vous permet de parer la victoire ;
 Plus d'un hameau vous donne en priz à la pudeur ;
 L'autel même où de Dieu repose la grandeur,
 Se parfume au printems de vos douces offrandes,
 Et la Rèligion sourit à vos guirlandes.
 Mais c'est dans nos jardins qu'est votre heureux
 séjour.

Filles de la rosée et de l'astre du jour,
 Venez donc de nos champs décorer le théâtre.

Chant 3.

Ye simply-charming tributes of the heart !
 E'en Friendship deigns your gentle aid to prove,
 You weave the fairest gift of trembling Love ;
 By you adorn'd more brightly Beauty shines,
 You 'mid her laurel-wreath, proud Conquest twines,
 You at the village feast are oft decreed
 To modest maidens as the dearest meed ;
 To God himself with grateful hearts we bring
 The earliest incense of the breathing spring,

And on his altar throw your blushing spoils,
 While with your chaplet crown'd Religion smiles;
 Haste then, with all your charms our plain adorn,
 Ye dewy daughters of the youth of morn.

The locality and disposition, however, of these fragrant gems "with colours dipt in heaven," demand no small portion of taste and judgment; for, as Mason has justly observed,

In the general Landscape's broad expanse
 Their little blooms are lost; but there are glades,
 Circled with shade, yet pervious to the sun,
 Where, if enamell'd with their rainbow-hues,
 The eye would catch their splendour: —

and he then adds, —

His taste will best conceive
 Their due arrangement, whose free footsteps, us'd
 To forest haunts, have pierc'd their opening dells,
 Where frequent tufts of sweetbriar, box, or thorn,
 Steal on the greensward, but admit fair space
 For many a mossy maze to wind between.
 So here may Art arrange her flow'ry groups
 Irregular: — *

* English Garden, Book iv., l. 179. — l. 194.

and in unison with this judicious advice of his accomplished contemporary, does De Lille teach us to scatter or to group the collected treasures of his Flora, gracefully finishing his precepts with a distinct eulogy on that queen of the garden, the unrivalled rose :

Sans obéir aux lois d'un art capricieux,
Fleurs, parure des champs et délices des yeux,
De vos riches couleurs venez peindre la terre.
Venez ; mais n'allez pas dans les buis d'un parterre
Renfermer vos appas tristement relégués.
Que vos heureux trésors soient partout prodigués ;
Tantôt de ces tapis émaillez la verdure ;
Tantôt de ces sentiers égayez la bordure ;
Serpentez en guirlande ; entourez ces berceaux ;
En méandres brillans courez au bord des eaux,
Ou tapissez ces murs, ou dans cette corbeille
Du choix de vos parfums embarrassez l'abeille.
Que Rapin *, vous suivant dans toutes les saisons,
Décrive tous vos traits, rappelle tous vos noms ;

* The author of "*Hortorum libri quatuor*," a poem first printed at Paris in 1665. It was translated by the celebrated Evelyn, in 1673, and by Mr. James Gardiner of Jesus College, Cambridge, in 1706. The subject of his first book is *flowers* ; of his second, *orchards* ; of his third, *waters* ; and of his fourth, *forests*. He is thus characterized by Mason :

A de si longs détails le dieu du goût s'oppose.
 Mais qui peut refuser un hommage à la rose,
 La rose, dont Vénus compose ses bosquets,
 Le printems sa guirlande, et l'amour ses bouquets.
 Qu'Anacreon chanta, qui formoit avec grâce
 Dans les jours de festin la couronne d'Horace.

Chant 3.

The version which I am about to give from our anonymous translator is, throughout, a faithful and spirited copy, and, in one or two instances, rises, I think, in its diction and metrical tone, beyond the level of the original. I would particularly point out, as of this description, the seventh and the closing couplets.

Charms of the eye, and graces of the plain,
 Ye flow'rs, the vain caprice of art disdain.
 Come, paint the ground with all your bloomy pride;
 Come, nor your rich allurements seek to hide

The tuneful trifling of the Bard,
 Who trick'd a Gothic theme with classic flowers,
 And sung of fountains bursting from the shells
 Of brazen Tritons, spouting through the jaws
 " Of Gorgons, Hydras, and Chimæras dire."

B. iii. l. 366.

Within the sad parterre's disgusting bound ;
 But let your smiling stores be show'r'd around.
 On the green lawn your blushing bloom display,
 Or with the path's gay laughing border stray ;
 Here form your tufts, yon bow'rs around entwine,
 Or on the riv'let's bank meand'ring shine ;
 Hang from those walls, or 'mid yon basket bloom,
 Where, tempted by the sweetly-breathed perfume,
Let the bee hesitate, as round he flies,
In what sweet cup to roll his little thighs.
 Your monthly change let fond Rapin pursue,
 Tell all your names, and paint each varying hue :
 Impatient taste abhors details so long ;
 But to the Rose, who dares refuse a song ?
 The Rose, with which her arbours Venus wove,
 The Spring his garland, and his nosegay, Love ;
Anacreon's fav'rite flow'r, the chaplet gay
Of jovial Flaccus on the festal day.

In complete contrast to this light and brilliant scenery, the French bard now makes a sudden transition to one of those features of the wild and picturesque of which the modern art of landscape gardening has so happily availed itself. He calls us to behold, in short, with what striking and admirable effect *rocks*, either

in their insulated or assembled state, may be rendered subservient to the purposes of him who possesses a just taste for the beauties and sublimities of nature. He contemns, however, in the most emphatic manner, all attempts to introduce such a constituent of landscape where it previously existed not, declaring, what experience has almost constantly taught, that the effort is alike presumptuous and abortive ; and he then indignantly exclaims, in allusion to this vain mockery of imitating man,

Loins de ces froids essais q'un vain effort étale,
 Aux champs de Midleton, aux monts de Dovedale,
 Whately, je te suis ; viens, j'y monte avec toi.
 Que je m'y sens saisi d'un agréable effroi !
 Tous ces rocs variant leurs gigantesques cimes,
 Vers le ciel élancés, roules dans des abimes,
 L'un par l'autre appuyés, l'un sur l'autre étendus,
 Quelqu'éfois dans les airs hardiment suspendus,
 Les uns taillés en tours, en arcades rustiques,
 Quelques-uns à travers leurs noirâtres portiques
 Du ciel dans le lointain laissant percer l'azur,
 Des sources, des ruisseaux le cours brillant et pur,
 Tout rappelle à l'esprit ces magiques retraites,
 Ces romantiques lieux qu'ont chantés les poètes.

Chant 3.

Far from such cold essays of feeble pow'r,
To Middleton, to Dovedale, let me tow'r ;
Whately, with thee I seem to scale the sky ;
Tho' pleas'd I tremble, as I mount on high.
Lo ! here a rock his huge gigantic brow
Enwraps with clouds ; deep in th' abyss below.
Another rolls ; or cliff on cliff high piled,
Wide o'er each other stretch their horrors wild.
Here boldly o'er the deep-plung'd valley flung,
Their rude arcades and frowning tow'rs are hung :
Or thro' their black and distant aisles, the blue
Æthereal gleams upon th' enchanted view ;
Or glitt'ring streamlets play adown the steep,
Or headlong cataracts in thunder sweep.
I view those magic scenes the wilds among,
Which bards of old in holy lays have sung.

The energy of the original is here finely supported, if not surpassed, by the vigorous version of our translator, whose powers are almost immediately afterwards taxed in transferring a picture of a very opposite nature, but to which his colouring is not less successfully adapted. The Abbé is speaking of the variety and pleasing effect produced by clothing the rude and naked rock with lichens, plants, and shrubs,

and by partially shading the more bold and prominent parts with forest foliage; and he then asks,

N'avez-vous pas encor, pour former leur parure,
Des arbustes rampans l'errante chevelure ?
J'aime à voir ces rameaux, ces souples rejetons,
Sur leurs arides flancs serpenter en festons.
J'aime à voir leurs fronts nuds, et leurs têtes
sauvages
Se coiffer de verdure, et s'entourer d'ombrages.
C'est peu. Parmi ces rocs un vallon précieux,
Un terrain moins ingrat vient-il rire à vos yeux ?
Saisissez ce bienfait ; deployez à la vue
D'un sol favorisé la richesse imprévue :
C'est un contraste heureux !

Chant 3.

Are there not curling shrubs that gently creep
To hang their tresses on the naked steep ?
How close they cling ! how gradual they glide !
I love their verdure on its sun-burnt side :
I love the little root that dares to blow
Upon its worn and weather-beaten brow.
And haply too the op'ning rocks between,
I find a small recess, delicious scene !

For soon, I ween, it answers to my care,
 And every fruit and every flower is there :
 Variety how rich !

Nothing can be more happily chosen, whether its sweetness or simplicity be considered, than the language of this translation, which steals in, like a dream of soothing moon-light, between the gloomy splendor of the preceding, and the still more terrific tinting of the following scene. The Gallic Virgil is asserting that it falls within the aim of the creator of the living landscape, provided he possess a correct taste, not only to smooth and to adorn the harsher aspects of Nature, but occasionally for the highest purposes of picturesque effect, to unveil her features in all their dread array, and to agitate the soul, in fact, with a grateful but a transient terror. With this view he says,

Au bord d'un précipice
 D'une simple cabane il pose l'édifice :
 Le précipice encore en paroît agrandi.
 Tantôt d'un roc à l'autre il jette un pont hardi.
 A leur terrible aspect je tremble, et de leur cime
 L'imagination me suspend sur l'abime.

Je songe à tous ces bruits du peuple répétés,
De voyageurs perdus, d'amans précipités ;
Vieux récits, qui charmant la foule émerveillée,
Des crédules hameaux abrègent la veillée,
Et que l'effroi du lieu persuade un moment.

Chant 3.

The version of this extract opens with a couplet for which the translator has no exact prototype in the French lines, but it leads gracefully and emphatically to the subject, and the residue of the version is given not only with great fidelity, but with great strength, and power of impression.

The rude impending rock, the darken'd wood,
May "breathe a browner horror on the flood;"
On the cliff's edge the simple cot be seen,
And hang new terrors o'er the broken scene;
Or bold from rock to rock a bridge be cast;
Back from the deep abrupt I shrink aghast!
Or fancy hangs me o'er their frowning brow,
While my soul shudders at th' abyss below.
Then creeps into my mind each horrid tale
Of travellers headlong hurl'd, and lovers pale,

By midnight murder dash'd the crags among ;
Tales that delight the wonder-loving throng,
And oft abridge the tedious village eve,
Which local dread impels me to believe.

It is seldom, however, that scenery of this terrific cast can be allowed to interrupt that flow of pleasurable emotion which should be the general result of the art of landscape gardening, and the author therefore hastens to conduct us from the crag, the mountain, and the cliff, to the vale which smiles below, and where, through verdure, shade, and flowers, the river pours along its exhilarating treasures. It is thus that the subject of *water*, one of the most important features both of the beautiful and picturesque, is introduced, and occupies, as it deserves to do, the greater part of the third book. The passage which opens on this delightful theme, is fortunately one of those to which due effect has been given by the magic colouring of the translator; praise of no mean moment when the merit and high finish of the original picture are duly considered :

O rochers ! ouvrez-moi vos sources souterraines,
Et vous, fleuves, ruisseaux, beaux lacs, claires fontaines,

Venez, portez par-tout la vie et la fraîcheur.

Ah ! qui peut remplacer votre aspect enchanteur ?
De près il nous amuse, et de loin nous invite ;
C'est le premier qu'on cherche, et le dernier qu'on quitte.

Vous fécondez les champs ; vous répétez les cieux ;
Vous enchantez l'oreille et vous charmez les yeux.
Venez : puissent mes vèrs, en suivant votre course,
Couler plus abondans encor que votre source,
Plus légers que les vents qui courbent vos roseaux,
Doux comme votre bruit, et purs comme vos eaux !

Et vous qui dirigez ces ondes bienfaitrices,
Respectez leurs penchans et même leurs caprices.
Dans la facilité de ses libres detours,
Voyez l'eau de ses bords embrasser les contours.
De quel droit osez-vous, captivant sa souplesse,
De ses plis sinueux contraindre la mollesse ?
Que lui fait tout le marbre où vous l'emprisonnez ?
Voyez-vous, les cheveux aux vents abandonnés ?
Sans gêne, sans apprêt, sans parure étrangère,
Marcher, courir, bondir la folâtre bergère ?
Sa grâce est dans l'aisance et dans la liberté !
Mais au fond d'un sérail contemplez la beauté ;

En vain elle éblouit, vainement elle étale
De ses atours captifs la pompe orientale ;
Je ne sais quoi de triste, empreint dans tous ses
traits,
Décèle la contrainte et flétrit ses attraits.

Chant 3.

Ye rocks, unlock your subterranean cells ;
Ye rivers, brooks, fair lakes, and limpid wells,
Give life, give verdure, as along you stray ;
No other beauties could your loss repay.
When near you please, from far your charms invite,
With joy we seek, with sorrow quit your sight ;
You fertilize the plains, reflect the skies,
Charm the rapt ear, and fix th' enchanted eyes.
Come, let my lay your warbling course pursue,
And flow in rich luxuriance like you ;
Light as the gales that sport your banks along,
Clear as your stream, and gentle as your song.

You, then, who wish the fertile waves to guide,
Give, as it lists, their wild caprice to glide.
Behold yon stream the jutting shore embrace,
As round it wanders in a gentle maze.
Say, with what right you dare in bounds restrain
The winding softness of its gliding train ?
See, unconfined, in simplest garb array'd,
Run, bound, exult along, the village maid !

While to each gale loose streams her flowing hair,
What liberty, what ease in every air !
And now to yon seraglio turn your eyes;
See there how sad imprison'd beauty lies !
Her charms in vain in all the glowing blaze
Of Eastern pomp the pining slave arrays ;
A secret sorrow casts its sullen shades ;
The captive droops, and each fair feature fades.

In this, and several other parts of the remainder of the third book, one or two of which I shall shortly have occasion to bring forward, De Lille appears to have studied with the happiest effect, many of the admirable and minutely descriptive sketches of Whately. It is evident, indeed, from a passage lately quoted, that the picture of Dovedale, as drawn by that elegant writer, had been strongly impressed on his mind, and it is one which describes with almost graphic minuteness, the varying beauties of the stream to which that romantic valley owes its name. The Dove, he remarks, " is transparent to the bottom, except when it is covered with foam of the purest white, under falls which are perfectly lucid. These are numerous, but very different: in some places they stretch straight

across, or aslant, the stream ; in others, they are only partial, and the water either dashes against the stones, and leaps over them, or, pouring along a steep, rebounds upon those below : sometimes it rushes through the several openings between them, and at other times it is driven back by the obstruction, and turns into an eddy. In one particular spot, the valley, almost closing, leaves hardly a passage for the river, which, pent up, and struggling for vent, rages, and roars, and foams, till it has extricated itself from confinement. In other parts, the stream, though never languid, is often gentle, flows round a little desert island, glides between aits of bulrushes, disperses itself among tufts of grass and of moss, bubbles about a water-dock, or plays with the slender threads of aquatic plants which float upon the surface." *

The poet of the Gardens, however, though he gives a justly marked preference to the freedom, diversity, and beautiful caprice of Nature in the disposition of her streams and falls of water, is not averse when necessary to call upon Art in the formation of the fountain or cascade,

* *Whately's Observations on Modern Gardening*, p. 114.

provided her assistance be in perfect subordination to the character of the scene, and consequently to the dictates of correct taste. It is then that

Le gazon est plus verd, l'air plus frais ; des oiseaux
Le chant s'anime au bruit de la chute des eaux,
Et les bois inclinant leurs têtes arrosées,
Semblent s'épanouir à ces douces rosées.

Plus simple, plus champêtre, et non moins belle
aux yeux,

La cascade ornera de plus sauvages lieux.
De près est admirée et de loin entendue
Cette eau toujours tombante et toujours suspendue ;
Variée, imposante, elle anime à la fois
Les rochers, et la terre, et les eaux, et les bois.

Chant 3.

Gales o'er the lawn a fresher odour fling,
And falling fountains wake the birds to sing ;
The waving woods their dewy branches bow,
And with soft showers embalm'd, the blossoms
blow.

With charms more simply wild, the rude cascade
May grace some savage wood's romantic glade.
Admir'd when near, far-heard in murmurs deep,
Still rolling on, still hanging from the steep ;

Various, and bold, it animates the woods,
The rugged rocks, the shore, and sleeping floods.

Almost immediately subsequent to this passage, which is translated with an equal degree of fidelity and spirit, the author bursts forth into a truly graceful and animated address to the ever-powerful, ever-varying influence of the stream, the river, and the torrent, whether viewed as constituents of the beautiful and picturesque, either of nature or of art.

Tableaux toujours puissans ! Eh ! qui n'a pas de
l'onde

Epruvé sur son cœur l'impression profonde ?
Toujours, soit qu'un courant vif et précipité
Sur des cailloux bondisse avec agilité,
Soit que sur le limon une rivière lente
Dèroule en paix les plis de son onde indolente ;
Soit qu'à travers les rocs un torrent en courroux
Se brise avec fracas ; triste ou gai, vif ou doux,
Leur cours excite, appaise, ou menace, ou caresse.
De Vénus, nous dit-on, l'écharpe enchanteresse
Renfermoit les amours, et les tendres désirs,
Et la joie, et l'espoir, précurseur des plaisirs.
Les eaux sont ta ceinture, ô divine Cybèle !
Non moins impérieuse elle renferme en elle

souvent, je m'en s
sombres

Que de la nuit encore

Accabloient ma pens

Si d'un ruisseau voisin

J'allois, je visitois ses

Le murmure, le frais c

Suspendoient mes chu

leur. —

Tel est, cher Watelet *

Tel est le simple asile c

Pure comme tes mœurs

En canaux ombragés la

Et visite en secret la ret

Et vous, fleuve charman

Si j'ai peint vos beautés,

Je me plus à chanter les

Beaux lieux, offrez long-t

L'image de la paix qui rè

* Claude Henri Watelet w
" Essai sur les Jardins "

To naturalise these tenderly pleasing lines without losing anything of their effect, must be deemed an undertaking of no very easy achievement; yet it is one which I am gratified in being able to remark, has been executed with singular success by our anonymous translator, who appears never so much at home as on subjects whose interest turns on the delightful association of pensive thought and moral feeling.

Dear soul-subduing scenes! with power confest
To wake the dullest, warm the coldest breast!
Whether the lively-bounding streamlets play,
And o'er the pebbles roll their murm'ring way;
Or slumb'ring o'er the sands in slow repose,
The winding river indolently flows;
Or the mad torrent hurls with thund'ring shock
Its raging billows o'er the bursting rock.
Mournful or gay, the streams disturb'd or smooth,
Still rouse, appease, threat loud, or gently sooth.
The Queen of Love, so poets sung of yore,
Around her waist a magic cestus wore;
Joy's gentle herald, Hope, the circle bound,
Desire, and Love, and Bliss, embraced it round.
Nor lesser gloriès, Cybele divine,
Amid thy wide and watry girdle shine;

Sadness and joy, dismay and terror there,
In ever-varying sounds and shapes appear.
And who than I have felt, have known them more?
Oft I remember, when the sullen pow'r
Of spleen, that darkens e'en the gloom of night,
Shrouded each thought, and blasted each delight;
If on my list'ning ears its murmurs stole,
I sought the brook to sooth my anguish'd soul,
The warbling coolness of the rippling tide
Lull'd ev'ry grief, and bade each pang subside:—
Such, O my Whatelet! is the lovely scene,
Where sleep the waters of the parting Seine;
I see the gently-flowing stream appear,
Free as thy life, and as thy manners clear;
In shady channels, lo, the waves divide,
And to a Sage's bow'r in secret glide!—
And thou, clear stream! and you, delicious woods!
If since my earliest years I've loved to pay
To meads, to groves, and streams, my rural lay;
Still to your gentle master's eyes impart
The image of that peace, which rules his heart.

It is, perhaps, worthy of observation, that the attachment which the French bard professes for the nymphs of flood and stream, should not only have been felt with an equal degree of intensity by his celebrated contemporary, the

poet of the English Garden, but should have drawn forth simultaneously, there is reason to believe, from his pen, a somewhat similar attestation of devotion to the same enchanting sisterhood. The partiality of Mason, however, is expressed with more particularity; he has been describing the course of a murmuring rill,

Whose song doth plain, and gurgle, as she goes,
As doth the widow'd ring-dove :

and he then exclaims, in a strain of deep enthusiasm, and in reference to the puny efforts of art,

Take, vain Pomp !

Thy lakes, thy long canals, thy trim cascades ;
Beyond them all true taste will dearly prize
This little dimpling treasure. Mark the cleft
Through which she bursts to day. Behind that
rock

A Naiad dwells : LINCIA is her name ;*

* " The name of this Naiad," says the author, " is formed from a little clear trout-stream, called the Lin, at Papplewick, in Nottinghamshire, the seat of Frederick Montagu, Esq. The village itself, which is situated on the edge of the forest of Sherwood, has not been without poetical notice before, Ben Jonson having taken some of his *Dramatis Personæ* from it in his unfinished Pastoral, called *The Sad Shepherd*."

And she has sisters in contiguous cells,
 Who never saw the sun. Fond Fancy's eye,
 That inly gives locality and form
 To what she prizes best, full oft pervades
 Those hidden caverns, where pale chrysolites,
 And glittering spars dart a mysterious gleam
 Of inborn lustre, from the garish day
 Unborrow'd. There, by the wild goddess led,
 Oft have I seen them bending o'er their urns,
 Chaunting alternate airs of Dorian mood,
 While smooth they comb'd their moist cerulean
 locks

With shells of living pearl. Yes, let me own,
 To these, or classic deities like these,
 From very childhood was I prone to pay
 Harmless idolatry. My infant eyes
 First open'd on that bleak and boist'rous shore,
 Where Humber weds the nymphs of Trent and
 Ouse

To his, and Ocean's tritons : thence full soon
 My youth retired, and left the busy strand
 To Commerce and to Care. In Margaret's grove,*
 Beneath whose time-worn shade old Camus sleeps,
 Was next my tranquil station : Science there
 Sat musing ; and to those that lov'd the lore

* " St. John's College in Cambridge, founded by Margaret Countess of Richmond, mother of Henry the Seventh."

Pointed, with mystic wand, to truths involved
In geometric symbols, scorning those,
Perchance too much, who woo'd the thriftless muse.
Here, though in warbling whisper oft I breathed
The lay, were wanting, what young fancy deems
The life-springs of her being, rocks, and caves,
And huddling brooks, and torrent falls divine.
In quest of these, at Summer's vacant hour,
Pleas'd would I stray, when in a northern vale,
So chance ordain'd, a Naiad sad I found
Robb'd of her silver vase; I soothed the nymph
With song of sympathy, and curst the fiend
Who stole the gift of Thetis.* Hence the cause
Why, favour'd by the blue-eyed sisterhood,
They sooth with songs my solitary ear.

English Garden, Book iii.

The Abbé now enters upon the various methods which may be adopted for the purpose of giving additional interest to the rill, the river, and the lake, by the means of plantations, islands, rocks, and embankments, and by the motion of vessels and aquatic birds; and he then adverts to the peculiar happiness of having

* "Alluding to the Ode to a Water Nymph which the author wrote a year or two after his admission into the university. See his *Poems*, Ode 2."

some tale of the times of old, some legend of fame, or love, or glory, so associated with the scene as may endear, and consecrate its springs and streams to every distant age. This latter topic opens to our view a most fascinating field of illustration, from whose treasures the French bard has, with equal taste and judgment, selected an instance in the highest degree appropriate to his subject, — the retreat of Petrarch to the fountain and solitude of Valclusa, and with which he concludes the third book of the early editions of his poem.

“ Towards the coast of the Mediterranean,” says the biographer of Petrarch, “ and on a plain beautiful as the Vale of Tempe, you discover a little valley enclosed by a barrier of rocks in the form of a horse-shoe. The rocks are high, bold, and grotesque, and the valley is divided by a river, along the banks of which are extended meadows and pastures of a perpetual verdure. A path, which is on the left side of the river, leads in gentle windings to the head of this vast amphitheatre : there, at the foot of an enormous rock, and directly in front, you behold a prodigious cavern hollowed out by the

hand of nature; and in this cavern arises a spring as celebrated as that of Helicon." *

To this lonely but romantic recess, where he purchased the cottage of a fisherman, did Petrarch retire, with the hope of mitigating in solitude the fervour of his passion for Laura. In the attainment of this effect, however, he utterly failed, for seclusion served but to fix his thoughts more intensely on the object beloved. "Here," he exclaims, in one of his letters, "the fire which consumed me having its free course, the valleys, and even the air itself, resounded with my complaints. It was in that time, that I composed those juvenile verses, which, being written in the warmth of my heart, are most grateful to those who are in a similar state of mind." †

In this beautiful retreat Petrarch passed several years before he again ventured to resume his connection with the busy world; and when death had deprived him of his Laura, an event

* *Mém. pour servir à la Vie de Petrarche, par l'Abbé de Sades, 3 tom. 4to.*

† *Essay on the Life and Character of Petrarch, 8vo. 1784, p. 11.*

which so far from diminishing his passion, seemed only to add fresh energy to it for the residue of his life, and he survived her not less than twenty-six years, to the same solitude he again returned, where as he tells us in a strain of unaffected contrition, "the veil which covered his eyes being now removed, and the chain broken which bound him to life, he dedicated his time to the exercise of those studies, which best could prepare him for a future and happier existence."*

There is every reason, however, to think that in the episode I am about to quote, De Lille is mistaken in supposing that Laura ever visited Vacluse. It was to fly from the too fascinating influence of a cold and unrelenting mistress, that Petrarch sought its shades, and though it doubtless often echoed to the name of Laura, it does not appear from any intimation in the writings of her lover, that she condescended to grace it with her presence. In a poetical point of view, however, this is of little consequence; let us turn, therefore, our attention to the commemorating lines of the bard.

* *Essay on the Life and Character of Petrarch*, p. 29.

Toi surtout, toi Vaucluse,
Vaucluse, heureux séjour, que sans enchantement
Ne peut voir nul poète, et surtout nul amant ?
Dans ce cercle de monts, qui, recourbant leur
chaîne,

Nourrissent de leurs eaux ta source souterraine,
Sous la roche voûtée, antre mystérieux,
Où ta Nymphé, échappant aux regards curieux,
Dans un gouffre sans fond cache sa source obscure ;
Combien j'aimois à voir ton eau, qui, toujours pure,
Tantôt dans son bassin renferme ses trésors,
Tantôt en bouillonnant s'élève, et de ses bords
Versant parmi des rocs ses vagues blanchissantes,
De cascade en cascade au loin rejaillissantes,
Tombe et roule à grand bruit ; puis, calmant son
courroux,

Sur un lit plus égal répand des flots plus doux,
Et sous un ciel d'azur coule, arrose et féconde
Le plus riant vallon qu'éclaire l'œil du monde !
Mais ces eaux, ce beau ciel, ce vallon enchanteur,
Moins que Pétrarque et Laure intéressoient mon
cœur.

La voilà donc, disois-je, oui, voilà cette rive
Que Pétrarque charmoit de sa lyre plaintive !
Ici Pétrarque à Laure exprimant son amour,
Voyoit naitre trop tard, mourir trop tôt le jour. —

Une grotte écartée avoit frappé mes yeux ;
Grotte sombre, dis-moi si tu les vis heureux,
M'écriois-je !

Chant 3.

O say, what bard, what lover e'er could rove,
Nor feel a rapture 'mid Valclusa's grove ?
Deep 'midst the circling hills that hang around,
And hide its source within their dark profound ;
Thro' vaulted caves the brook mysterious steals,
And from each eye profane its course conceals.
I love to view the limpid current glide,
And in the black abyss its waters hide !
Here in a bason calm the stream is spread,
And there it thunders o'er a rocky bed ;
Against the cliffs it hurls its whit'ning waves,
And down from steep to steep it foams and raves,
Till its wild torrent gains the plain below,
And calms its rage, and plays in milder flow ;
Reflecting fair the azure vaulted skies,
In twenty dimpling channels swift it flies,
Wat'ring, as on they wind their mazy folds,
The fairest valley that the sun beholds.
Yet nor that sky, those streams, that lovely vale,
Enchant my soul so much as Petrarch's tale.
Those banks, I cry'd, have heard the bard complain,
While to the gale he pour'd his plaintive strain.

There, while his Laura listen'd to his lay,
He wish'd the west'ring sun awhile to stay :
Or mourn'd her absence thro' the long, long night,
And strain'd his eye to view the dawning light, —
A distant shaded grot attracts my eye ;
Saw you their raptures, gloomy cave? I cry.

The extracts which this third book of the Gardens of De Lille has furnished for my readers, must, I should conceive, have placed before them the abilities of the translator for the task he undertook, in a very favourable point of view. They will, therefore, it is probable, regret with me, when they reach the close of this book as given in the latest editions of the poem, that the beautiful, and enthusiastically-written, eulogium on the taste and genius of Pope, (as displayed as well in landscape gardening as in poetry), and which now terminates this portion of the work, should not have fallen beneath the notice of our anonymous bard. It is, of all the additions which the Abbé made to the first draught of his poem, the one perhaps most interesting, especially to an English ear, and would, no doubt, have been finished with

the happiest industry of the translator. Enough, however, ere I close my quotations will be given to establish, I trust, the truth of the assertion with which these papers set out; namely, the great occasional felicity of this early and almost forgotten version of *Les Jardins*, par M. l'Abbé De Lille.

(To be continued.)

No. XV.

A great perturbation in nature! to receive at once the benefit of sleep, and do the effects of watching. — Yet I have known those which have walked in their sleep, who have died holily in their beds.

SHAKSPEARE.

It was late before Shakspeare reached the Hall; for his mind had been so much absorbed by reflections on what had passed between himself and Hubert Gray, that he had become utterly unconscious of the very slow pace by which he was proceeding homewards. He felt rather surprised, therefore, on finding that Montchensey and his daughter had been anxiously awaiting his return, and, after apologising for his inadvertency, and pleading the beauties of the scenery, and the singular fineness of the evening, as his excuse, and sustaining some raillery on the occasion, which he replied to

with his usual spirit and good humour, he retired, somewhat fatigued, to his chamber.

The same meditations, however, which had accompanied his homeward walk, pursued him to his couch, and even when he had dropped into sleep, a similar association of ideas was present to his imagination. He conceived himself pleading before his sovereign for the life of Hubert, and when, as he believed, he had just obtained the gracious boon he sought, he beheld him the next moment, with the common inconsistency of dreams, hurried to a place of execution. He awoke in a state of perturbation and alarm, and rising in his bed to look around him, for the moon, struggling through a heated and somewhat hazy atmosphere, shed a faint and sickly light into the room, he thought he heard a slight jarring noise, and presently a low and indistinct moaning very near that part of the chamber which he occupied. Concluding these, however, to be merely the result of the confused state of intellect in which his dream had left him, he tried to recompose himself to rest; but a repetition of the same sounds, followed by a deep and heavy-drawn sigh, brought a speedy

conviction of their reality. The recollection of what his servant had told him on the first night of their arrival, concerning this room, and the neighbouring apartments, now came into his mind, and, springing from the bed, and wrapping his night-gown around him, he stood listening for some minutes with an almost breathless interest and curiosity. Presently he again heard the same jarring noise which had at first awakened him; it seemed to issue from a spot on one side of, and not far from the head of his bed, and sounded like the effort made to open a door whose hinges had been long unused to their office. Scarcely, however, had his attention been turned in this direction, before he saw that part of the arras whence the noise had proceeded, strongly illumined from behind, and in an instant after, to his utter astonishment, he beheld it slowly lifted up, and there stood before him a female figure with a lighted taper in her hand. There was a glare and fixedness of expression in her eyes, which were wide open, that immediately suggested to Shakspeare the persuasion that she was walking in her sleep. He remained therefore motionless and watching the

event, whilst the object of his now almost painful anxiety, dropping gently the tapestry behind her, advanced into the room. She appeared to be of middle age, her person tall and finely formed, and her features beautiful, but stamped with an air of settled melancholy. She had closely folded round her a robe of the deepest black; her hair, long and golden in its tint, hung wild and disheveled on her neck and shoulders, whilst the pearly whiteness of her complexion, approaching almost to a death-like hue, formed a striking contrast with the character of her dress.

Having reached the foot of the bed, she paused for a few moments, and then cautiously withdrawing the curtains, she held up the light. There was at this instant a wildness in her countenance that assumed the appearance of insanity, mingled, at the same time, with traces of the deepest anguish. She sighed heavily and repeatedly, and then, reclosing the curtains, she looked around her with a seeming emotion of surprise and disappointment. A shuddering, as if from fear or terror, in a moment after agitated her frame, and returning with a rapid step to

that part of the room where she had entered, she again raised the arras, and disappeared.

Shakspeare, who during this singular scene had remained apparently unnoticed, and indeed almost rivetted to the spot with astonishment, now determined, the moment after his extraordinary visitor had left him, to pursue her footsteps, anxious not only to ascertain who she was, and whence she came, but apprehensive also of danger either to herself or to what was around her from the light she carried; yet he was greatly relieved by perceiving that with the fortunate peculiarity of those who walk in their sleep, and who see and recollect objects once familiar with a morbid distinctness and vividity, she carefully avoided every thing with her taper that was likely to suffer injury from fire.

Scarcely then had the tapestry returned to its place, ere it was again uplifted by our poet, who found himself in a large and lofty chamber, just time enough to perceive as he entered it, by the gleaming of her taper, his late visitant quitting it by a door at the opposite extremity. He pursued with quick and noiseless stealth, and followed into a gallery of considerable extent,

hung on both sides, as far as he could judge from the scanty light which preceded him, and the partial glimpses of the moon through its numerous windows, with a series of family portraits.

It was here that the object of his anxious pursuit began to slacken in the speed with which she had hitherto retired; and, as soon as she had reached the centre of the gallery, she stopped, holding up her taper so as to throw its full illumination on a large picture, which Shakspeare, who had cautiously stolen behind her through the shade, immediately recognised as a portrait of his friend Eustace Montchensey.

The agitation with which she seemed to contemplate this resemblance of his kind host, and which was indeed a strong and faithful likeness, instantly brought to the recollection of Shakspeare the information which he had received from Roland as to the existence of the wife of his friend; she was "amiable but unhappy," he had said, and he could not but believe that the being thus described was now before him. A very few moments, indeed, sufficed to place the matter beyond all doubt, for she soon began to

give utterance to the feelings which were kindling in her bosom ; and conceiving herself again present at a scene which the picture before her had reproduced with all the strength and vividness of reality, she knelt down as if imploring mercy, calling out in extreme agony of mind, as she fixed her eyes upon the portrait, " Montchensey, O my husband, spare, spare my beloved brother, O spare the life of Raymond Neville ! — He bleeds ! he dies ! " and she uttered a faint shriek, throwing herself, as she imagined, on the body of her murdered brother. In a few minutes, however, she again arose : " Hush ! hush ! " she exclaimed, in a whispering tone of voice, " tell them not where I have buried him ! the moon sleeps sweetly there, and the flowers shed perfume on his grave ; we will go and pray beside him ! " Then, after a momentary pause, she added, gliding softly and quickly over the floor as she spoke, " Come, come, let us go ; the nightingale is gone before us, and shall sing us to our rest ! " and immediately passing through a door that stood open at the further end of the gallery, and

which, either by accident or design, closed instantly upon her, she was seen no more.

The faculty indeed of pursuit was no longer in the possession of our poet; for he stood thunderstruck, as it were, by the discovery that, in the person of the wife of Montchensey, he beheld the sister of his friend! The marriage had, in fact, taken place at a period when Raymond Neville, being deeply involved in the vortex of political tumult in Ireland, where his incautious conduct had given rise to accusations of disloyalty which, though unfounded, he could not satisfactorily disprove, all communication between himself and Shakspeare had been, from the disturbed state of the sister-kingdom, entirely cut off; and as he was obliged to fly to the continent, the result of his unfortunate machinations, soon after, the latter had possessed no opportunity of acquiring any subsequent knowledge of his family or connections; indeed, for the last eighteen years, he had heard from Neville himself but once; and previous to the singular occurrence of this night, knew not, in fact, that either he or his sister remained in existence.

His surprise, therefore, and horror of mind, at this very sudden and awful recognition, may be more readily imagined than described; for it was not until the moment when she pronounced the name of Raymond Neville, that he had any recollection of her person; so much had time, together with the pressure of misfortune and grief, preyed upon and changed the expression of her features. To have found her also at the same moment, not only the wife of his friend, but that friend, as would appear from what had just escaped her lips, the sole author of her distress, and the meditator, if not the perpetrator, of a deed of violence which had driven her to distraction, were further discoveries of so unexpected and overwhelming a description, that it was some time before he could sufficiently recover from the shock to be able to retire to his apartment.

Here, no sooner had he thrown himself upon his bed, than a multitude of painful reflections crowded upon him. Well might Montchensey, he thought, be the melancholy and abstracted being he occasionally appeared; for assuredly, had he felt nothing to reproach himself with in

relation to his wife, he had long ago heard, either from his own mouth, or that of his daughter, some mention at least of her existence, if not of her history and sorrows; nor would concealment, as was evidently practised with regard to a part of the household, have been necessary. And what too had become of his friend Neville? Had he perished in a land of strangers, or was he, as he had some slight reason to hope, still living? And how striking, he then recollected, how extraordinary was the resemblance which the youth called Hubert Gray, bore to this unhappy exile; and, above all, how strange, how mysteriously strange, that, during his late slumbers, occupied, as they were, by what intimately concerned the fate and fortunes of Hubert Gray, he should be visited by the very being who might possibly not only be nearly related to him, but might prove essentially instrumental, should Raymond Neville be still living, in developing what he now felt to be singularly near his heart, the origin and, as as he thence hoped, the happiness of this unfortunate but interesting young man.

It was evident, however, that even could his

surmises be proved true with regard to the birth of Hubert, the peace of all parties would greatly depend upon what had been the conduct of Montchensey, and especially upon what had been the origin and final issue of his contest with Neville. He came, therefore to the determination of seeking, in the first instance, an explanation from Montchensey himself, of what had this night occurred ; and, afterwards, should the account be satisfactory, of immediately revisiting the cottage of Simon Fraser, from whom he might then hope to learn what would throw still further light on this mysterious subject.

As soon, therefore, as the family had risen, Shakspeare requested an interview with his friend in the library, and, after a few preparatory observations, related to him, though in the most delicate and guarded manner, the circumstances of the preceding night.

The astonishment and the distress of Montchensey on hearing these particulars, were, as may naturally be supposed, in the extreme ; and it was, in truth, some time before he was sufficiently master of himself to reply. At length, after an arduous struggle, in which the

strongest passions of the mind seemed to chase each other in his agitated features with the rapidity almost of lightning, he faintly uttered: "A merciful Providence has then graciously effected that for me which I have long been vainly endeavouring to do for myself—to open to you a subject whose fatal influence bows me to the earth, which has wrecked my peace of mind, and is hurrying me, a victim of anguish and remorse, to the brink of the grave. Yes, my friend, the poor sufferer whom you saw last night, and who has once again, I find, escaped the vigilance of her attendants, is the wife of Eustace Montchensey! It is now twenty years since our marriage took place; at that time Bertha Neville, whom I had first met at the house of a relation of my own in Westmoreland, was one of the most beautiful young women I had ever beheld; nor was she less amiable and accomplished than beautiful; but, unfortunately, her heart had been attached by one who proved himself totally unworthy of her; and though the connection had been broken off, on the part of her guardians, nearly a twelvemonth before I saw her, for her parents had been dead some

years, it was evident she had not ceased to suffer from the effects of this early and first impression. The disappointment, however, had, in my estimation, served rather to heighten than diminish her attractions, for it had thrown over her whole person and manner, an air of tender and subdued melancholy, which irresistibly made its way to the heart. I hesitated not, therefore, to push my suit with all the hope and ardour incident to my age, for I was then but five and twenty; and being supported by her friends, who not only wished to see the previous impression removed, but highly approved my character and rank in life, I, at length succeeded in obtaining from Bertha a somewhat reluctant consent, trusting that time, and the assiduities of affection, would accomplish for me all that was wanting to perfect my felicity.

“ Most unhappily for us both, her brother, whom I had never seen, and who was the only near relative that death had spared her, was then absent in Ireland, plunged in difficulties which his own impetuosity had, in a great measure, occasioned; and who, having lately lost his wife, had the stings of domestic sorrow

added to those which political defamation had unsparingly inflicted. He had added his approval, however, to that of the guardians of my Bertha; and, a very short time after this, saw us united and fixed at Wyeburne Hall.

“ Here, however, the prospect which, in the fervour of youthful passion and a heated imagination, I had fondly hoped to realise, faded gradually from my view. Not that I had any reason to blame the conduct or the kindness of Bertha; she was all that she had promised to be,—all that a bruised heart, whose secrets she had lain before me with the most guileless simplicity, would allow her to be. It was to my own impatience in not allowing time for the wound to heal, to my own madness and credulity in listening to suggestions which I ought instantly to have abhorred and despised, that the misery and remorse I now feel is to be attributed.

“ But let me be brief in giving this melancholy detail; it was, in fact, very shortly after the birth of Helen, and when little more than a twelvemonth had elapsed since our union, that I began to receive anonymous letters, intimat-

ing that my wife was still attached to her first admirer, and that, notwithstanding all appearances to the contrary, she not only kept up a correspondence with this youth, but occasionally had interviews with him in the neighbourhood of the Hall. You will scarcely, perhaps, credit my weakness when I tell you, that though at first I despised these calumnies, which I have since found to have originated with the very wretch himself whose overtures had been rejected, and for the very purpose of effecting the misery which has resulted, yet the repetition gradually and almost insensibly worked upon my mind, occasioning a mixture of doubt and jealousy, that ultimately led to a system of espionage on my part, of which I cannot now think without the most hearty abhorrence of its meanness and folly.

“ The punishment, however, which followed, has been such as may possibly atone, not only for this injury, but for the dreadful, though in some degree unconscious crime into which it plunged me. Yes, my friend, you may well start, for I have to unfold to you what has stained Eustace Montchensey with the heavy

guilt of blood! — Not many months had passed from the period when these infamous reports first reached me, when, on my unexpected return rather late, one summer's evening, from a somewhat distant excursion, I was informed that Bertha had been absent some time; that she had gone out unattended, and had been traced to a remote plantation, on the verge of which she was seen to meet a man closely muffled up; and that they entered it immediately together. Shocked and enraged by this information, which seemed to corroborate all that had been previously insinuated by my unknown correspondent, I instantly seized my rapier, and hastened to the spot described. And here, after cautiously winding my way for some minutes towards the interior of the grove, I discovered the individuals I was in search of. It was a sight which, as you may suppose from the state of mind I was then in, wrought upon my soul even to phrenzy. They appeared to be taking leave of each other: a ray of the setting sun shone full on the face of Bertha, and I could perceive she had been weeping, but the features of the youth were turned from

me. Imagine my feelings as I heard the farewell of affection trembling on their lips, and when I beheld them the next moment locked in each other's embraces. I rushed forward in a paroxysm of fury; a piercing shriek escaped from Bertha, and, calling upon the villain, as I then thought him, to defend himself, I buried my sword, after a sharp but nearly momentary contest, in his bosom.

“ It was then that, forgetting for a while the fever of revenge, which had only but the instant before boiled in my veins, I could not but look with horror, and a feeling of remorse, on what I had been led to inflict. Bertha, whom I had loved with the most impassioned fondness, lay stretched before me, apparently lifeless; and my antagonist, speechless and convulsed with pain, seemed to be bleeding to death. My first effort, as soon as I could shake off the paralysing effect of such a spectacle, was, inconsistent as it may appear, to staunch the blood which I had thirsted but the moment before to spill; and then, taking up Bertha in my arms, I brought her safely hither, with the assistance of some peasants, whom I

fortunately met with on the way. She had shown some symptoms of returning life during the act of conveyance; and very soon after she reached home, and had been placed on her bed, her senses, and with them the faculty of speech, were restored. But, good God! what was my astonishment, what my feelings, when I heard her call upon Raymond Neville, upon her brother, as the man whom I had wounded, whom I had, in all probability, slain! For a few moments I stood rivetted to the spot, unable either to speak or move, a spectacle of horror and despair! But no sooner did I recover from the shock, than recollecting the state in which I had left the unhappy victim of my rage, I uttered a loud cry, and rushing out of the room, called upon my servants to follow me. We hastened to the spot; but judge of my amazement, when no traces of the body, save the blood which had been spilt, could be found! I knew it to be impossible that Neville, on the supposition that Nature had again rallied, could, from the loss he had sustained, and its consequent weakness, have himself arisen. Who,

then, had conveyed the body away? and whither had it been carried?

“ In this state of uncertainty, and almost of distraction, with the weight of innocent blood upon my soul, (for I had little doubt then, and have still less now, of the fatal issue of the contest,) I returned to Wyeburne Hall, to witness the sufferings, and what was to me, if possible, a still more intense degree of punishment, the silent reproaches of my injured wife.

“ The disappearance, indeed, of the body, and with it, of course, all means of positively ascertaining what had been the final fate of her brother, augmented, to a dreadful degree, the distress of Bertha. Though void of hope myself, I tried, by every effort in my power, to excite a belief in her bosom that he had been succoured in time to save his life; but the endeavour was in vain; and, after the first paroxysms of grief had subsided, she gradually sank into a state of profound melancholy and abstraction, amounting, in short, at times, to partial derangement, and from which she has never since, at least for any length of time, recovered.

“ You may picture to yourself, my friend, the never-ceasing affliction into which this situation of my domestic affairs has continued to plunge me. There was a period, indeed, when I had flattered myself that Bertha might have been restored, if not to happiness, at least to peace of mind, to such a degree had she regained her wonted composure; but the loss of her two sons, whom she had borne me during the earlier years of her affliction, seemed to re-introduce all her former trains of sorrow; and latterly she has lived altogether apart from the family, in a suite of rooms appropriated solely to her use, and which are situated over the very gallery into which she had last night, I apprehend, wandered during her sleep. Here, perfectly secluded, with the exception of one old servant, from the rest of the household, who have been purposely taught to look upon these apartments with a superstitious dread, she is attended by a lady whose time is exclusively devoted to her service, and with whom she occasionally walks in an adjoining garden, entirely set apart for her use; and my daughter also spends part of every day in her society. It has

been, in truth, a task of painful necessity to me to keep the mother and daughter sufficiently separate, so strongly are they attached to each other; but both the health and spirits of Helen had suffered so much by the unrestrained intercourse, that I thought it my duty to interfere. Indeed, a similar effect, though in a far higher degree, has, I am conscious, been produced on my own mind and constitution from the like cause; for I have long felt, as the consequence, perhaps, of great nervous irritability, a peculiar proneness to superstitious terror."

As Montchensey said this, a shivering indicative of horror seemed to pass over his frame, and his eye assumed a wild and somewhat alarmed cast of expression. In a moment or two, however, recovering from this sudden abstraction, he added, "I am almost ashamed to confess, that to such lengths has this tendency sometimes hurried my imagination, that I have often fancied that there exists in the mind of my poor Bertha a mysterious pre-intimation of misfortune, when about to occur either to herself or to some part of her family; and that this has

been unequivocally shown at the time, by a more than usually perturbed state of her mind, producing the very phenomenon which you witnessed last night. Twice did she thus walk in her sleep a short time before the death of her two sons, and, in both instances, immediately previous to the attack which carried them off. Can you wonder, therefore, that I should view with awful forebodings the recurrence of an event which has thus been the herald of disaster? for should I be deprived of my beloved Helen, what on earth remains for me?"

"Calm your apprehensions, my friend," replied Shakspeare, "nor suffer these fearful anticipations to unman you. Much, I confess, of what is extraordinary, much of what is scarcely dreamt of in our philosophy, appears to have determined the events of last night; but, since I have listened to your narrative, I am persuaded they are meant for good and not for evil. One disclosure, at least, of the very first importance to your peace of mind, they will assuredly lead to; for, owing to the conversation we have just held, I now hasten to inform you, and I do it with the most unfeigned pleasure,

that Raymond Neville most certainly did not die from the consequences of your rencounter."

"Gracious Heaven!" exclaimed Montchenssey, with a mixed emotion of rapture and astonishment, "is it possible! where, when, how did you gain this intelligence? Are you certain of the fact?"

"I have it from the best of all authorities," returned the bard, "from a letter written to me by Raymond Neville himself, a twelvemonth subsequent to the date of your disastrous meeting."

"What a weight of oppression, what a load of misery," rejoined Montchenssey, "have you at once removed from my soul! Oh, let me fly to communicate this joyful intelligence to Bertha!"

"Stay, my friend," interrupted Shakspeare, alarmed at the proposal, "suffer me, I beseech you, to be the communicator of this news. Nothing but the most cautious and indirect mode of conveying it can be safe; or we shall otherwise destroy what the pressure of misfortune has spared us. Pardon the interference, but all is at stake, and I dare not trust your feelings!"

“ I submit to your better judgment, my kind counsellor,” said Montchensey, “ thankful that Providence has conducted you hither in this extraordinary crisis of my fate. But where is Neville, is he yet living, is he still an exile from his native land? And what are the precise circumstances which led to his disgrace and ruin? For all that I have been able to learn from Bertha is, that whilst an officer in Ireland, in the army of Essex, he was suspected of carrying on a treasonable correspondence with the family of Tyrone.”

“ I am nearly, if not altogether, as much in the dark as yourself with regard to these particulars,” rejoined Shakspeare; “ for though previous to his embarkation for Ireland, Raymond Neville and myself were bosom friends, having been introduced to each other by my Lord Southampton, and I occasionally heard both of him, and from him during the earlier period of his campaigns in that island, I could ascertain nothing further than that having been entrusted by Essex with several personal negotiations with Tyrone, he had, unfortunately, owing to the opportunities which the importunate hospitality of

Tyrone had afforded, fallen deeply in love with the beautiful daughter of that chieftain. A correspondence had ensued, and the malignity of his enemies had been but too successful in founding upon it, in the first place, an accusation of undue attachment to the cause of her father, and ultimately a charge of treason. He escaped, however, the death which they had assigned him, by a flight to the continent, an expedition which must have been delayed for some time, and to his great peril, by the wounds which your unfortunate rashness inflicted; for, from the period to which your narrative relates, there can be no doubt that his journey hither had been intended as a step preparatory to his final departure from Britain. Of the casualty, however, which thus temporarily arrested his purpose, or even of his sister's marriage with yourself, not a syllable was mentioned in the letter to which I have alluded. It is now seventeen years since that letter was received, and, with the exception of having once heard, and that shortly afterwards, that he had gone on a distant expedition in the army of Henry of France,

I have learnt nothing further concerning him, nor do I know, indeed, that he still exists.

“ But it is to this letter, my friend,” continued Shakspeare, “ distant as is its date, that I am persuaded, in conjunction with what the last night has produced, we are about to owe a second discovery, in importance only inferior to that which has so lately gratified your feelings. You will scarcely credit me, perhaps, when I tell you, that Hubert Gray, him whom you have banished from your roof, your former favourite, and the favourite too of Helen Montchensey, is the son of Raymond Neville; ay, and moreover, one and the same with Roland the freebooter, and the minstrel whom you saw at Stratford !”

It would be utterly impossible to describe the varied and conflicting emotions, the mixture of astonishment and joy, of fear and hope, of sorrow and remorse, which, by turns, agitated the breast of Eustace Montchensey, when these strange facts were announced. He absolutely gasped for breath, nor was it until after repeated efforts, that he was able to say, in a low and tremulous tone of voice, “ I know not whether

most to grieve or to rejoice at the information you have given me. It is, indeed, of so extraordinary a nature, that, although I am sure you would not willingly trifle with my feelings, I must suspend my entire belief until I learn what has led you to these conclusions."

Shakspeare now entered into a full account of his meeting with Hubert Gray the preceding evening, of the conversation which they held together, and of the confessions which he had made as to his identity with the minstrel at Stratford, and Roland the outlaw. "I must own," he continued, "that if I felt interested by the lofty yet open and generous deportment of the leader of banditti, however faulty he might be in other respects, that interest was heightened in a tenfold degree, when I recognised these features in combination with the character, such as it had been described to me by Simon Fraser and your daughter, and such, indeed, as I afterwards found it to be, of the amiable, the tender, and romantic Hubert Gray. It formed an assemblage, mine host, which, though not altogether perfect in its moral bearing, and where, alas ! shall we look for perfection, has delighted

me by its freshness and originality; but how was its impression on my mind strengthened and endeared, when I beheld in this young man the very image of my long-lost friend and favourite, Raymond Neville! whose character was, in many of its leading parts, very closely approximated to what circumstances have so strongly developed in the person of Hubert Gray.

“ It was this striking resemblance, together with the remarkable particulars which I had heard concerning his early history and situation at Wyeburne, which brought vividly to my recollection that memorable letter from poor Neville, in which, after dwelling at some length on his melancholy prospects abroad, he mentions that he had left his son, then a child three or four years old, in England, under the care of a worthy and respectable old man, who had formerly been a retainer in his father’s family; but under the idea, I suppose, of soon writing again, he omitted to state the name and place of abode of the person with whom he had placed him; and though I subsequently made every enquiry in my power, it was not until yesterday evening,

when, of course, all hopes of discovery had for years been banished from my mind, that any clue was afforded me which could promise success.

“So forcibly, however, did these coincidences strike my mind, that though then unacquainted with the connection subsisting between your family and that of the Nevilles, I ventured to suggest to Hubert, what I thought the most likely means of mitigating his despair, and of inducing him to throw off the associations he had so unhappily formed, the possibility of ascertaining his parentage, as grounded on the likeness I had traced, though I should add, without disclosing the name of the party resembled. But the incident of last night, my friend, and mark too, I pray you, the very remarkable period of its occurrence, together with the conversation I have had with you this morning, puts the matter, in my opinion, beyond all doubt. But let us hasten to the cottage of Simon Fraser; if any thing be wanting to ensure our certainty on the subject, it is from that quarter we shall, in all probability, obtain it; for the secrecy to which, I understand,

Simon has been pledged, must assuredly give way to the circumstances, and the necessity which we shall place before him."

To this proposal, Montchensey, whose feelings had been strongly excited by the picture which Shakspeare had drawn of his interview with the unhappy youth, very gladly assented. He had, indeed, ever loved Hubert, and though unwilling to see his daughter united to one of whose origin he knew nothing, he estranged himself from him with great reluctance; nor could he avoid many compunctious visitings of conscience, when he heard of his long and frequent absences from Wyeburne, and listened to the surmises which were afloat concerning his wild and irregular mode of life, knowing as he did, that to these practices he had, in a great measure, been driven by what had occurred at the Hall. It was the verification of these reports which he had just heard from the mouth of Shakspeare, and to an extent beyond what he had ever dreamt of, that now pressed heaviest on his heart; for how dreadful, how sudden, might be the fate, he thought of this young man, amenable as he now was to the

offended laws of his country. He was inexpressibly anxious, therefore, not only to see Simon Fraser, but to procure an interview, as soon as possible, with Hubert himself. "Oh! my friend," he exclaimed to Shakspeare, as they rapidly pursued their walk together to the village of Wyeburne, "scarcely has my mind been liberated from the horrible impression of having human blood in one instance to account for, than this fresh source of somewhat similar uneasiness is about to assail me; for not only is it appalling to reflect, that should the father be still alive, a death of ignominy may alike await both him and his son, but in the latter case, how shall my conscience acquit me of being accessory to the event; and what under these circumstances may be the sufferings of my beloved Helen, both on his and my account, I dread to think!"

"So accustomed have you been, my good friend," replied Shakspeare, "to look on the gloomy side of things, that you perceive not the rays of light which are dawning on our horizon. Nothing more than mere suspicion attaches to the conduct of Raymond Neville; the enmity

which sought his ruin, is past and gone, and the time is now come when, if he be still alive, I am persuaded a little exertion in his favour would do much. Nor are the lawless eccentricities of Hubert without many palliating accompaniments; for, independent of the causes which gave them birth, has he not, in fact, through their means, been instrumental in converting what was formerly a gang of atrocious robbers, into something very little removed from a troop of comparatively harmless deer-stalkers. Believe me, then, all shall yet be well; and, indeed, should the testimony of Simon Fraser be what I trust it will be, I shall find much to interest me deeply in the affair; for I loved Raymond Neville, as I have mentioned before, almost as a brother, and this rogue, Hubert, with all his faults, has already won my heart. Besides, is not the happiness of yourself, and that of my excellent little Helen, nay, perhaps, the only chance of restoration for your unhappy Bertha, dependant on the fate of the Nevilles? In short, though I would not boast Master Montchensey, yet I think I can do you some service. I tried, indeed, what I could for my

friend when first I heard of his misfortune; but the ear of my then gracious mistress, the incomparable Elizabeth, irritated as she was by the occurrences of the Irish expedition, was prejudiced against him, and the only channel too through which I could apply, was one not calculated, at that period, to recommend my suit. But the times are now changed, and my Lord Southampton can do that with King James which he could not effect with Elizabeth. Go to, then! shall I not, with so many incentives to action, with so many added means for success, again try every effort in my power? Yes, my friend, no sooner shall I have left the cottage we are now approaching, than I will hasten to London, fully assured as, I trust, I shall then be, not only as to the parentage of Hubert, of which I have, indeed, even now, scarce a doubt, but of the existence perhaps of the elder Neville; and prepared, therefore, alike for enquiry on the one hand, and solicitation on the other."

The only acknowledgment which in the fullness of his heart Montchensey could make for these benevolent intentions, was by a kindly pressure of the hand, for the tears had started

into his eyes, and his voice had become inarticulate from emotion. But the feelings of each were well and mutually understood; for, indeed, the generous enthusiasm of the bard, and the overflowing gratitude of Montchensey, could not be mistaken, so deeply were they respectively imprinted on their features and manner.

It was while these sensations held their exclusive empire over the hearts of both, that they reached the neat but humble abode of Simon Fraser. The good old man was sitting in the porch of his cottage, that he might enjoy the warmth of the morning sun, whilst the honeysuckle gadding luxuriantly along the trellis work over his head, effectually protected him from the scorching influence of its beams. He rose, not without much surprise, at the approach of his guests, for he had little expected to see again beneath his roof the master of Wyeburne Hall.

“ My worthy Simon,” exclaimed Montchensey, in answer to a most respectful welcome from the grey-haired minstrel, “ I am come hither to offer you my hand as a pledge of returning cordiality, of that unreserved confidence

indeed, that, until lately, subsisted between us, but which circumstances that ought not, I confess, to have reached you, have unhappily interrupted." Here he paused, apparently exhausted by fatigue both of body and mind, and dropping into a chair, he added in a low tone, "But, as I feel myself, from the recent hurry of my spirits, unequal to the task of explanation, I must refer you to my admirable friend here, who is, I understand, not unknown to you, and who has been, in truth, a principal agent in effecting what we have to communicate. I will now, therefore, merely say, that to receive Hubert, and to protect him from all danger, will be, in future, the objects nearest to my heart."

Tears of delight sparkled in the eyes of Simon Fraser on hearing this declaration, and turning on Shakspeare a look, in which gratitude, curiosity, and admiration, seemed equally mingled, the poet, anxious to relieve what he knew must be a state of painful suspense, immediately entered on the narrative of what had happened, mentioning his interview with Hubert Gray, the occurrences of the preceding night, his conversation with Montchensey that morning, and

his former intimacy with Raymond Neville. "And now, my kind friend," he added as he closed his detail, "nothing more is wanting than your testimony to perfect the discovery which we have begun, and from what you have now heard, and the conviction which must necessarily follow as its effect, that the happiness of all parties depends upon the establishment of what we are seeking, I trust you will deem the secrecy to which, I understand, you have hitherto been pledged, as no longer binding upon you. We would ask of you, then, in the first place, if Hubert Gray be, or be not, the son of Raymond Neville; and in the second, whether you know if the latter be yet in existence?"

"My honoured Sirs," replied the venerable Fraser, almost overcome by the varied emotions of joy and astonishment which had agitated his bosom whilst Shakspeare was speaking, "pardon the weakness of a fond old man, for indeed the very extraordinary account you have just given, has been almost too much for me to bear. I would it were in my power fully to satisfy your expectations, for I feel, with yourselves, that all

motive or object of concealment, whatever may have been the original necessity, has now passed away. What I have, however, to communicate, though it does not form a direct reply to your questions, will go nigh, I think, to set the matter at rest.

“ It was not many months after the melancholy event which took place at the Hall, in which my honoured patron here was reported to have slain a stranger in a duel; for, as I saw him not previous to the encounter, neither then, nor since, indeed, until this very hour, have I had the smallest suspicion that this person was Raymond Neville; it was, I say, not many months after this event, that one evening, as the dusk was setting in, a man, muffled up in a large wrapping coat, knocked at my cottage door; he had in his arms, and fast asleep, a beautiful child, apparently about four years of age, which, after presenting me with a small packet, he begged leave to commit for a few minutes to the care of my wife. No sooner, however, had she complied with this request, than the man, perceiving me earnestly engaged in reading what he had brought, suddenly darting from the cot-

tage, disappeared in the gloom, nor could I trace his footsteps for more than an instant. This child was Hubert Gray, and the packet, containing a letter, a sum of money, and some clothes, was from my young Lord, as I once used to term him, Master Raymond Neville, who stated therein, that the little boy whom he had sent, and whom he wished me to take care of for some years to come, was the son of a particular friend of his; and that, for reasons which he would one time or other reveal to me, it was his earnest desire, and solemn injunction indeed, that his, Raymond Neville's, name, should not be mentioned in the transaction, nay, that his very existence should be kept a profound secret, enjoining me to this by every tie of gratitude which the remembrance of his father's kindness and protection to myself and family, could enforce. He further added, that remittances would be regularly forwarded to me through a banker's hands in London, and that, through the same channel, I was, from time to time, to communicate intelligence as to the welfare of Hubert Gray, and, (under a fictitious name for her,) which he then mentioned, what

might be the state of his sister's mind and health.

"I need not say," he continued, addressing Montchensey, "for you yourself, my noble friend, have been a witness of it, that I have loved Hubert Gray, even as my own child, and that until this hour, when I find any further secrecy would be destructive to my master's house, I have kept the injunction which was laid upon me."

"I know it, my worthy Fraser," cried Montchensey, "and I honour you for your conduct; but let me ask you, if you never have had reason positively to conclude that Hubert Gray was the son of Raymond Neville?"

"Certainly, never positively," replied Simon; "but I must confess that I had my suspicions as to this being the case, even from the first; and when Hubert grew up as it were the very image of his father, these suspicions amounted in my mind almost to conviction."

"And can you, I repeat, give us any information, Master Simon," said Shakspeare, "as to the existence or place of residence of the unfortunate Neville; for my anxiety to discover him

is, if possible, encreased by finding that your account, though strongly corroborative of what we had concluded to be the fact, does not absolutely go so far as to identify Hubert Gray as the son of my friend?"

"I am sorry to say that I cannot," he returned, "for I have never held any direct communication with Raymond Neville since the night of my receiving the little Hubert; and, indeed, owing to the remittances having been withheld for the last two years, a circumstance which before that period had never taken place, I have unhappily been induced to think that he is no longer living."

Here, Shakspeare, turning to his friend Montchensey, remarked, that until something more certain could be ascertained, he thought it would be better for both, to avoid a meeting with Hubert Gray. "You, my kind friend, however," he added, addressing Simon, "will, in all probability, see him very soon, for he assured me when we parted, that he would speedily revisit your cottage. Tell him, then, without mentioning what we have just now disclosed, for I would not further excite hopes which it is yet possible

may not be realised, that I am earnestly engaged on his behalf, and that, I trust, it will not be long before we meet beneath your roof." Then, after enquiring the name and residence of the banker with whom Simon had formerly communicated, he added, shaking the old man most cordially by the hand, "And now, my noble-hearted Fraser, fare thee well! I go, high in hope, notwithstanding the slight disappointment which has met me here, that I shall yet once more see my long-lost friend, that I shall witness the reunion of the father and the son, and that the Hall of Montchensey and the Cottage at Wyeburne shall have reason to love the memory of Shakspeare!"

The heart of the minstrel glowed within him as he listened to these words, whilst Montchensey, almost equally moved, could only reply by imploring blessings on the head of one whom he had long known as the first and noblest of poets, but whom he had now to acknowledge as the best and kindest of men.

"Not only we, but every distant age, shall love thee, bard of Avon!" cried the minstrel,

with a prophet's enthusiasm, as Shakspeare, deeply affected, turned from the cottage at Wyeburne.

(To be continued.)

No. XVI.

Here shall Contemplation imp
Her eagle plumes; the Poet here shall hold
Sweet converse with his Muse; the curious Sage,
Who comments on great Nature's ample tome,
Shall find that volume here. For here are caves,
Where rise those gurgling rills, that sing the song
Which Contemplation loves; here shadowy glades,
Where thro' the tremulous foliage darts the ray
That gilds the Poet's day-dream: — Nor if here
The Painter comes, shall his enchanting art
Go back without a boon: for Fancy here,
With Nature's living colours, forms a scene
Which RUISDALE best might rival.

MASON.

THE distribution and contrast of the various scenes, gay or sombre, soothing or romantic, touching or sublime, which the art of picturesque gardening is adequate to the task of creating, and which we have seen as it were start into being during the preceding parts of the poem, now fix the attention of the reader, and con-

stitute, in fact, the leading topics of the *fourth* and *last* book.

From such an intimation, much of what is highly beautiful and interesting, much of what is calculated to please the imagination and attach the heart, will naturally be expected; nor will any disappointment ensue from indulging these anticipations; for the work rises in poetic power as it advances, and I am happy, also, to add, that in the bolder and best sustained flights of his author, the translator follows with a vigorous and an equal wing.

Proud, and justly so, of the truly felicitous nature of his theme, the French bard opens this portion of his labours by asking who will venture to despise the subject of his song, and he then, in a triumphant tone, exclaims

Il inspiroit Virgile, il séduisoit Homère :

Which gentle Virgil blush'd not to rehearse,
Which stole a place in mighty Homer's verse ! *

* Alluding to "the Eclogues and Georgics of Virgil, and the description of the shield of Achilles by Homer, where the sieges and battles are happily contrasted by the vintage, the harvest, and the pastoral scenes of peace."—Translator's Note.

and he very shortly afterwards apostrophises the poet of Greece in the following emphatic manner :

Chantre divin, je laisse à tes muses altières
 Le soin de diriger ces phalanges guerrières ;
 Diriger les jardins est mon paisible emploi,
 Déjà le sol docile a reconnu ma loi,
 Des gazons l'ont couvert, et de sa main vermeille
 Flore sur leur tapis a versé sa corbeille,
 Des bois ont couronné les rochers et les eaux.

Chant 4.

Divine Enthusiast ! be it thine to form
 The phalanx deep, and guide the battle's storm.
 'Tis mine the garden's peaceful pomp to sway,
 And *bid* the *docile* soil my voice obey :
 The turf spreads smooth, and Flora's rosy hand
Shakes her wild blossoms o'er the laughing land,
 Whilst rocks and waves are crown'd with nodding
 shade.

After this graceful exordium, the best mode of displaying the embellished scenery, through paths and walks which, from their careless and undulating play, appear to be of Nature's own formation, is the topic next touched upon, and

becomes introductory to a description of the various landscapes to which, like episodes in a well-constructed poem, these desultory windings lead; and which should, like the bardic pictures just alluded to, be so wrought up and finished as to call forth in succession the most pleasing and contrasted emotions of the mind. A few sketches of this kind, which will place the merits of the translator in a very conspicuous light, shall now be brought forward. De Lille is pointing out the diversified views which should attract and gratify the wanderer's eye, as he steals along the sinuous path, or lies reclined beneath the sheltering tree. Here should be seen, he tells us, a gloomy cell, the abode of Silence and of Solitude; there a lovely lake should expand its bosom to the gale, and, beyond, the distant landscape should melt into the horizon, whilst

Quelquefois un bosquet riant, mais recueilli,
Par la nature et vous richement embelli,
Plein d'ombres et de fleurs, et d'un luxe champêtre,
Semble dire: " Arrêtez! où pouvez-vous mieux
être?"

Soudain la scène change ; au lieu de la gaieté,
C'est la mélancolie et la tranquillité ;
C'est le calme imposant des lieux où sont nourries
La méditation, les longues rêveries.
Là, l'homme avec son cœur revient s'entretenir,
Médite le présent, plonge dans l'avenir,
Songe aux biens, songe aux maux épars dans sa
carrière ;
Quelquefois, rejetant ses regards en arrière,
Se plait à distinguer dans le cercle des jours
Ce peu d'instans, hélas ! et si chers et si courts,
Ces fleurs dans un désert, ces tems où le ramène
Le regret du bonheur, et même de la peine.

Chant 4.

In rendering the first two couplets of this passage, the translator has deviated considerably, and with the happiest effect, from his original. "The question 'Où pouvez-vous mieux être ?' he observes in a note, "had so much of the air of a petit-maître's impertinence in it, that it seemed utterly inconsistent with the character of the grove. Though this scene invites us to pleasure, it is to that of a higher cast than what the original seems to give us an idea of; it is to a pleasure which a refined soul, and

a mind entirely devoted to the beauties of nature, can alone enjoy. The translator has endeavoured to introduce none but appropriate images, and those without which the grove would scarcely know to charm." In fact, the first ten lines of the version may be considered, if we except a single image in the opening couplet, as altogether original, and both these, and the residue of the quotation, are, as to beauty of thought, and poetry of diction, entitled to high praise. It can be said of them, indeed, without any injustice to the Gallic bard, that in dignity of tone and pathos of expression they advance a step beyond the general cast and structure of the French poem.

Sometimes let blooming shades attract the sight,
And to their cool refreshing bowers invite,
Where Pleasure loves along the banks to rove
Of a clear brook that murmurs through the grove :
Or, stretch'd some beech-tree's spreading shade
 beneath,
Round which the woodbine winds in many a wreath,
Delights to hear the bee laborious sing,
Or feel the ev'ning zephyr's balmy wing,

While each fringed copse beneath, and bow'r above,
Breathe the sweet notes of innocence and love.
Lo! the scene shifts, and joy is seen to fly ;
And Melancholy meek, with tearful eye,
And Contemplation wrapt in thought profound,
Possess the widely-silent glooms around ;
Where man awhile, sublimed from low desires,
To commune with his secret soul retires ;
Thinks on the present, scans his future state,
Explores what ills, what blessings round him wait ;
Or loves a retrospective glance to cast
On many a dear ecstatic rapture past ;
To mark those few, those fleeting hours that smiled, •
Like flowers that bloom amid a desert wild ;
Those scenes of long-lamented joys to mourn,
Nay, sigh for pains that never can return.

It is indeed one of the highest provinces of the art which our poet is celebrating, so to interchange the scenery that no feeling of insipidity or ennui should be experienced. We must, therefore, carefully avoid the gay monotony of ever-smiling bowers, nor fear to introduce, as in consonancy with some of the best and most cherished feelings of the human breast, objects which may soothingly remind us of our

sorrows and deprivations ; for, as our translator has well expressed it,

Who has not wept some sad, some cruel blow ?

To seek, under such circumstances, for the solitude of groves and streams, is the natural wish of the mourner : and how dear a solace it must be to find nature sympathising, as it were, with our grief, and casting over the urn or tomb the protection of her holiest shade, will be readily understood by all who have ever felt the luxury of a tear which “ sacred pity hath engender’d.” It is with a sentiment of this kind swelling at his heart, that the poet of the Gardens exclaims,

Déjà pour l’embrasser de leurs ombres paisibles,
 Se penchant sur la tombe, objets de vos regrets,
 L’if, le sombre sapin ; et toi, triste cyprès,
 Fidèle ami des morts, protecteur de leur cendre,
 Ta tige chère au cœur mélancolique et tendre,
 Laisse la joie au myrte et la gloire au laurier ;
 Tu n’es point l’arbre heureux de l’amant, du guerrier

Je le sais ; mais ton deuil compatit à nos peines.

Chant 4.

Already, lo ! the yew and fir extend
Their mournful arms, the quiet grave to shade,
Where, whom you weep, in lasting night is laid ;
And thou, sad cypress, faithful to the dead,
That o'er the dust thy guardian gloom dost spread,
The brow of conquest to the laurel leave,
And still let joy his myrtle chaplet weave :
What tho' victorious warriors scorn thy gloom,
And happy lovers brighter wreaths assume ;
Dear to the sorrows of the tender soul,
The mourner's breast thy solemn shades console.

In creating scenery of this kind, however, the utmost simplicity and truth of feeling are required, lest any the smallest appearance of show or affectation should creep in to violate and destroy the sanctity of the associations which should consecrate such a spot. For what can be more disgusting, what more revolting, than to know, or even to suspect, that in a place so set apart, you behold

Urns without grief, and tombs without a tear.

The author, indeed, of the poem before us, very earnestly dissuades against any attempt at such a simulation of sorrow, recommending,

that if you have no departed friend to whose memory you can with sincerity dedicate the expression of your regard, to call in, if your situation will admit of it, a view of the neighbouring church cemetery, where sleep the peasantry who have worked upon your estate, and been your faithful and your patient servants through life. The scene is certainly one that could not fail to excite in every humane bosom the emotions and the reflections which the bard is solicitous to awaken; and it is but justice to add, that he has enforced the suggestion in a manner which reflects the highest credit on his head and heart.

Beautiful and touching, however, as is the passage in the original, from its judicious imitation of Gray, yet must the version be pronounced superior; for it is on the ground of having occasionally introduced the very words of the Elegy, where M. De Lille has most closely copied the sentiment of the British bard, that the translator has in a note, very justly remarked, that "the passage affords an opportunity for a comparison that must necessarily end in the triumph of English poetry." It is one also

which, I may venture to say, exhibits the taste and poetical tact of the translator to the highest advantage.

“Who would blush,” asks the Abbé, “to grace the humble sepulchre of the industrious cottager?” and he then proceeds to describe what had been the tenor of his lowly life.

Depuis l'aube, où le coq matinal
 Des rustiques travaux leur donne le signal,
 Jusques à la veillée, où leur jeune famille
 Environne avec eux le sarment qui pétille,
 Dans les mêmes travaux roulent en paix leurs jours ;
 Des guerres, des traités n'en marquent point le
 cours ;
 Naître, souffrir, mourir, c'est toute leur histoire.
 Mais leur cœur n'est point sourd au bruit de leur
 mémoire.
 Quel homme vers la vie, au moment du départ,
 Ne se tourne, et ne jette un triste et long regard,
 A l'espoir d'un regret ne sent pas quelque charme,
 Et des yeux d'un ami n'attend pas quelque larme ?
 Pour consoler leur vie honorez donc leur mort.
 Celui qui de son rang faisant rougir le sort,
 Sert son Dieu, son Roi, son pays, sa famille,
 Qui grava la pudeur sur le front de sa fille,

D'une pierre moins brute honorez son tombeau ;
 Tracez-y ses vertus et les pleurs du hameau :
 Qu'on y lise : *Ci gît le bon fils, le bon pere,
 Le bon époux.* Souvent un charme involontaire
 Vers ses enclos sacrés appellera vos yeux.
 Et toi qui vins chanter sous ces arbres pieux,
 Avant de les quitter, Muse, que ta guirlande
 Demeure à leurs rameaux suspendue en offrande.
 Que d'autres dans leurs vers célèbrent la beauté ;
 Que leur muse, toujours ivre de volupté,
 Ne se montre jamais qu'un myrte sur la tête,
 Qu'avec ses chants de joie et ses habits de fête ;
 Toi, tu dis au tombeau des chants consolateurs,
 Et ta main la première y jeta quelques fleurs.

Chant 4.

With early morn, what time the cock first crows,
 The simple patient labourer arose ;
 Till late at eve, around the crackling hearth,
 His little children soothed him with their mirth :
 In toil unwearied roll'd his peaceful day,
 Nor wars nor treaties mark'd his " noiseless way :"
 " For to be born, to suffer, and to die,"
 The poor man cried, " is all my history."
 Nor yet disdains his soul the voice of fame,
 The rude memorial of an honest name.

Who unconcern'd his being e'er resign'd,
Nor "cast one longing ling'ring look behind?"
Who has not hoped a friend's regret to share,
Nor wish'd to claim "the tributary tear?"
O! let the toils, 'neath which in life they groan'd,
Be by the honours of their graves atoned!
Oh! let a stone less rugged grace his tomb,
Whose noble virtues shamed his humble doom!
Who serv'd his God, his family with zeal,
Obey'd his king, and lov'd his country's weal;
With modesty who stamp'd his daughter's brow,
There trace his virtues, and the hamlet's woe.
There let us read, "Beneath this humble stone
"Lies the good sire, good husband, and good son."
And thou, O Muse! who 'neath this solemn gloom,
That loves to shroud the ever-silent tomb,
Has tried to sooth "the dull cold ear of death,"
Upon their boughs suspend thy votive wreath.
Let others woo bright beauty to their arms,
And, drunk with pleasure, celebrate her charms,
In festive robes adorn'd, their lays resound,
Their brows for ay with verdant myrtle crown'd:
Thou to the grave consoling strains hast sung,
And earliest blossoms on the tomb hast flung.

Turning from subjects of this mournful complexion, the poet calls us to a consideration

of the beauties which may be engrafted on landscape gardening by a judicious introduction of architectural objects. He reprobates, however, in the most emphatic manner, a wild and lavish profusion of buildings, culled from every age and nation,

Kiosk, pagoda, obelisk, and dome,
Drawn from Arabia, China, Greece, and Rome,

correctly and tastefully declaring that no ornament of this kind should find its place in the garden aiming at the highest province of the art, to which the epithets *idle* or *inappropriate* can possibly attach. The remark leads him to a warmly-expressed encomium on the pleasing effects to be derived, in a picturesque point of view, from the simple farm, and its rural occupations :

La ferme ! A ce nom seul, les moissons, les vergers,
Le règne pastoral, les doux soins des bergers,
Ces biens de l'âge d'or, dont l'image chérie
Plut tant à mon enfance, âge d'or de la vie,
Réveillent dans mon cœur mille regrets touchans.
Venez de vos oiseaux j'entends déjà les chants ;

J'entends rouler les chars qui traînent l'abondance,
Et le bruit des fléaux qui tombent en cadence.

Chant 4.

The farm ! what joys that single word can give !
What warm emotions in my breast revive !
The golden age again resumes the year !
The harvests, orchards, past'ral joys appear !
Those scenes adored in youth, life's golden age !
Hark ! how the birds my list'ning ears engage !
I hear the cars that roll abundance round,
And flails in cadence falling on the ground !

To give such a degree of chaste and simple elegance to the scenery of the farm as shall adapt it to become one of the most delightful constituents of embellished landscape, demands no common union of simplicity in design, and judgment in execution ; but the object once attained, it is then, to adopt a line of our author, that

La ferme est aux jardins ce qu'aux vers est l'idylle.

Nor are the implements of farming, nor many of its operations, to be hidden from our

view; and more especially is the animation of the farm-yard, and particularly that of the feathered tribes, their sports, their manners, and their polity, to be deemed essential to the variety we are in search of. On these topics of rural economy, as accommodated to the purposes of the picturesque in gardening, the French poet has dwelt at considerable length; but as I do not think his translator has been eminently successful in transfusing the colouring which has given them their grace and spirit, I forbear to quote from this part of the work, reserving my next specimen of the version for a subject which, from the superior vigour and elevation of its tone, appears to have again called forth his best exertions. M. De Lille has passed from the description of domestic birds to indulge in a slight sketch of those of foreign climes,

Birds whom the sun in radiant plumes attires,
And bids them glow with all their parents' fires,

and who are condemned to be lodged in the splendid aviary. Yet, whilst he yields to the

wish of the opulent for collecting these beautiful strangers of another land, he strongly declares against the attempt to confine those, whether foreign or domestic, whose spirit chafes and repines at the smallest deprivation of their freedom. It is a passage, though short, of great energy in the original; and it falls beneath the eye of the English reader without any diminution of effect:

Eh ! quel œil sans regret peut voir le roi des airs,
L'aigle, qui se jouoit au milieu de l'orage,
Oublier aujourd'hui dans une indigne cage
La fierté de son vol, et l'éclair de ses yeux ?
Rendez lui le soleil et la voûte des cieus :
Un être dégradé ne peut jamais nous plaire.

Chant 4.

Who can unmoved behold the feather'd king
Forget his light'ning eye and tow'ring wing,
Coop'd in the confines of a narrow cage,
Who wont to revel 'mid the tempest's rage ?
Give him his sun, his vault of heav'n again ;
Degraded Nature must be view'd with pain.

Having given due attention to the aviary, the Abbé proceeds to enumerate the gratifica-



tions springing from the green and hot-house ; and he then hastens to mention various other buildings, which, as exhibiting utility or beauty, or combining both, may be admitted with effect into the grounds ; such as the bath, hidden by weeping willows ; the fisher's cot ; the secluded bower, dedicated to friendship and the muses ; the monumental obelisk ; the hermitage, and the classical temple ; nor, in a subsequent part of the book, does he hesitate to set apart the grove and smiling mead, as an appropriate domain for the almost breathing busts and statues of the good and great. The description of this latter scene is one of great beauty, and, having had justice done to it by the translator, claims a place in these pages. It must be, indeed, peculiarly dear to the English reader, as terminating with a just and very pleasing apostrophe to the memory of our immortal countryman and navigator, the virtuous and intrepid Cooke.

Créez un élysée où leur ombre repose :
Loin des profanes yeux, dans des vallons couverts
De lauriers odorans, de myrtes toujours verds,

En marbre de Paris offrez-vous leurs images.
Qu'une eau lente se plaise à baigner ces bocages,
Et qu'aux ombres du soir mêlant un jour douteux,
Diane aux doux rayons soit l'astre de ces lieux.
Leur tranquille beauté sous ces dais de verdure,
De ces marbres chéris la blancheur tendre et pure,
Ces grands hommes, leur calme et simple majesté,
Cette eau silencieuse, image du Léthé,
Qui semble pour leurs cœurs exempts d'inquiétude,
Rouler l'oubli des maux et de l'ingratitude,
Ce bois, ce jour mourant sous leur ombrage épais,
Tout des mânes heureux y respire la paix.
Vous donc, n'y consacrez que des vertus tranquilles.
Loin tous ces conquérans en ravages fertiles : —
Montrez-y Fénélon à notre œil attendri ;
Que Sully s'y relève embrassé par Henri.
Donnez des fleurs, donnez ; j'en couvrirai ces sages,
Qui, dans un noble exil, sur des lointains rivages
Cherchoient ou répandoient les arts consolateurs.
Toi surtout, brave Cook, qui, cher à tous les cœurs,
Unis par les regrets la France et l'Angleterre ;
Toi qui, dans ces climats où le bruit du tonnerre
Nous annonçoit jadis, Triptolème nouveau,
Apportoï le coursier, la brebis, le taureau ; —
Ta voile en arrivant leur annonçoit la paix ;
Et ta voile en partant leur laissoit des bienfaits. —
Helas ! de quoi lui sert que deux fois son audace
Ait vu des cieux brûlans, fendu des mers de glace ;

Que des peuples, des vents, des ondes révééré,
 Seul sur les vastes mers son vaisseau fût sacré ;
 Que pour lui seul la guerre oubliât ses ravages ?
 L'ami du monde, hélas ! meurt en proie aux sauvages.

Chant 4.

There in Elysium let their shades repose,
 Free as the gods from reach of human woes.
 Of Parian marble let their statues shine,
 Far from each eye profane, where myrtles twine,
 And laurel shades o'erhang the vale beneath,
 Whose groves a gentle streamlet loves to bathe.
 There let night's queen, in silver radiance throned,
 With doubtful light bestrew the glimm'ring ground.
 The verdant shade, the gentle calm below,
 The marbles whiter than the virgin snow,
 The simple grandeur of those sons of fame,
 The waves that sleep, like Lethe's silent stream,
 And seem oblivion sweet of woes to roll,
 And deeds ungrateful to the peaceful soul :
 The day, that 'neath the shady curtain fades,
 All breathe the blest repose of happy shades.
 Be tranquil virtues there alone adored ;
 Far be the sons of rapine and the sword,
 Whose mad ambition set the world on fire : —
 Let Fenelon there meet our melting eyes !
 And Sully clasp'd in Henry's arms arise !

Bring flow'rs, bring fairest flow'rs, I'll crown their
brows,

Who scorn'd in noble exile mean repose,
Who sought the arts of social life to rear ;
And thee, to all the world so justly dear,
Whom France and England now unite to mourn,
O Cook ! with loveliest garlands I'll adorn !
Thou to those lands, where erst the thunder's roar
Announced our coming to th' affrighted shore,
A new Triptolemus across the deep,
Didst bear the plough, the horse, the bull, the
sheep ;
Thou with fair peace th' approaching land didst
hail,

And grateful nations bless'd thy parting sail. —
What boots it now, that twice thou daredst to brave
The burning skies, and cleave the ice-bound wave?
That, by all nations, winds, and waves revered,
Safe o'er the main thy sacred vessel steer'd ?
That raging war in thee forgot the foe ?
Some heavenly arm prevent th' impending blow !
Alas ! 'tis vain, the savage dart has sped ;
The friend of man lies number'd with the dead."

But of all the accompaniments to the grand
or beautiful in nature, beyond all others, both
in rarity and value, are the remains of antiquity,
whether classical, feudal, or monastic. For-

tunate, indeed, is the man whose domains can boast of acquisitions such as these, and still more so, if he possess the taste and tone of feeling adequate to a just estimate of their priceless worth, as objects not only of the highest picturesque embellishment, but as calling forth the most striking historical associations, and awakening, at the same time, a train of reflections in a very striking degree awful yet pleasing, pensive yet consolatory.

Animated by the warmest enthusiasm for these precious reliques of the olden time, M. De Lille appears to have exerted all the energies of his genius in painting their delightful influence over the heart and imagination; and, accordingly, the finest passages in the fourth book, or perhaps in the whole poem, are those which are devoted to this fascinating subject. Happy has it been for the author, and equally so for the English reader, that these admirable sketches have lost nothing of their raciness and spirit from the pen of our anonymous translator; on the contrary, they appear to me to have been benefited by the medium through which they have passed.

The Abbé has been expatiating on the advantages to be derived to landscape gardening from the elegancies of modern architecture, and he then immediately subjoins,

Mais de ces monumens la brillante gaieté,
Et leur luxe moderne, et leur fraîche jeunesse,
D'un auguste débris valent-ils la vieillesse ?
L'aspect désordonné de ces grands corps épars,
Leur forme pittoresque attache les regards ;
Par eux le cours des ans est marqué sur la terre ;
Détruits par les volcans, ou l'orage ou la guerre,
Ils instruisent toujours, consolent quelquefois.
Ces masses que du tems sentent aussi le poids,
Enseignent à céder à ce commun ravage,
A pardonner au sort. Telle jadis Carthage
Vit sur ses murs détruits Marius malheureux,
Et ces deux grands débris se consoloient entre
eux. —

Et toi qui m'égarant dans ces sites agrestes,
Bien loin des lieux frayés, des vulgaires chemins,
Par des sentiers nouveaux guides l'art des jardins,
O sœur de la Peinture, aimable Poésie,
A ces vieux monumens viens redonner la vie ;
Viens présenter au goût ces riches accidens,
Que de ces lentes mains a dessiné le tems.

Chant 4.

But how are all these toys of modern taste,
Tho' by rich novelty and fancy graced,
Tho' gay in youth they laugh along the plains,
Surpass'd by proud Antiquity's remains !
What awful wonders strike the astonish'd eye,
When thrown around the mould'ring ruins lie ;
Where arches, columns, from their bases hurl'd,
Mark Time's wide empire o'er the crumbling
world !

O'erthrown by earthquakes, storms, or hostile rage,
They teach submission, and our griefs assuage.
Those wrecks that yield to Time's all-conquering
pow'r,

Bid us with patience bear th' afflictive hour.
Such, Carthage, haply was thy ruin'd state,
When 'mid thy walls the exiled Marius sate ;
While each proud wreck beheld the other's lot,
And in each other's fate their own forgot.

Sister of Painting, Poetry divine,
With whom amid these rural haunts I stray,
Far from the beaten track and common way,
That to our grounds new beauties I may give,
O come, and bid these monuments revive !
Come, and whate'er laborious time has traced
With patient pencil, consecrate to taste.

The subject of *classical* ruins is shortly afterwards resumed in reference to Rome, and in lines of no little force and splendour, whether the original or the translation be considered.

O champs de l'Italie ! ô campagnes de Rome,
Où dans tout son orgueil git le néant de l'homme !
C'est là que des aspects fameux par de grands
noms,

Pleins de grands souvenirs et de hautes leçons,
Vous offrent ces objets, trésors des paysages.
Voyez de toutes parts, comment le cours des âges
Dispersant, déchirant de précieux lambeaux,
Jetant temple sur temple, et tombeaux sur tom-
beaux,

De Rome étale au loin la ruine immortelle ;
Ces portiques, ces arcs, où la pierre fidelle
Garde du peuple roi les exploits éclatans,
Leur masse indestructible a fatigué le tems.

Chant 4.

Ye plains of Rome, amid whose ruins dread,
In all its pomp, man's vanity is laid !
What awful lessons breathe from all around,
From all those wrecks by mighty names renown'd !
Lo ! o'er the scene old Time, with impious stride,
Spurning the precious fragments far and wide,



Temple on temple hurls, and tomb on tomb,
And spreads afar th' immortal wrecks of Rome.
Those porticos, those arches, yet proclaim
The shining glories of the Roman name.
Their faithful records yet unhurt remain,
And weary Time assaults their bulk in vain.

It is very rarely, however, even upon the continent, that ruins of this description fall within the province of the embellisher of grounds, and still less are they to be expected in our own island. To the remains therefore of *feudal* and *monastic* grandeur, as objects more likely to come into the possession of the great landed proprietor, the author turns our attention. Justly and beautifully, however, as he has painted these important adjuncts to the picturesque, he deprecates with great good taste every attempt to imitate them as a vain and idle artifice, pertinently observing, that the effort is like that of an infant distorting its little face in order to assume the character of old age.

Whilst about to contemplate the exquisite pictures of the Norman Castle and Conventual Fane, as exhibited in the work of M. De Lille,

it is impossible not to recollect those on the same subjects which had been just previously produced by the poet. of the "English Garden;" and as a comparison of these masterly delineations, which the very nature of the art they had chosen to celebrate was calculated to suggest, cannot but be highly interesting to the reader, I shall make no apology for introducing to him, in the first place, as earliest executed, the beautiful designs of Mason.

In thy fair domain,
Yes, my loved Albion! many a glade is found,
The haunt of wood-gods only: where if Art
E'er dared to tread, 'twas with unsandal'd foot,
Printless, as if the place were holy ground.
And there are scenes, where, tho' she whilom trod,
Led by the worst of guides, fell Tyranny,
And ruthless Superstition, we now trace
Her footsteps with delight; and pleased revere
What once had rous'd our hatred. But to Time,
Not her, the praise is due: his gradual touch
Has moulder'd into beauty many a tower,
Which, when it frown'd with all its battlements,
Was only terrible; and many a fane
Monastic, which, when deck'd with all its spires,

Served but to feed some pamper'd abbot's pride,
And awe th' unletter'd vulgar. Generous youth,
Whoe'er thou art, that listen'st to my lay,
And feel'st thy soul assent to what I sing,
Happy art thou if thou canst call thine own
Such scenes as these : where Nature and where Time
Have work'd congenial ; where a scatter'd host
Of antique oaks darken thy sidelong hills ;
While, rushing thro' their branches, rifted cliffs
Dart their white heads, and glitter thro' the gloom.
More happy still, if one superior rock
Bear on its brow the shiver'd fragment huge
Of some old Norman fortress ; happier far,
Ah, then most happy, if thy vale below
Wash, with the crystal coolness of its rills,
Some mould'ring abbey's ivy-vested wall.

Book i. l. 355.

Chastely coloured and exquisitely touched as are these delightful sketches of the time-worn reliques of Gothic architecture, and difficult as it must be to follow in the footsteps of such an artist, it will be allowed, I think, that the efforts of M. De Lille in bringing these striking objects before us, are neither wanting in vigour of conception, nor in their own peculiar beauties of

execution. He has, in fact, spread a wider canvass, and has given us, if not a more graceful, yet a more minute description of the scenery which he had in view. His obligations, however, to the celebrated Epistle of Pope from Eloisa to Abelard, will not escape the notice of the reader; nor can we too highly praise the masterly manner in which the translator has executed his task on this occasion, the entire version of the passage, and especially of that part of it which relates to the abbey, being worked up with the loveliest and most impressive colouring which English poetry can afford. He has, indeed, very judiciously availed himself of the diction of that unrivalled epistle to which we have just alluded.

Tantôt, c'est un vieux fort, qui du haut des collines,
Tyran de la contrée, effroi de ses vassaux,
Portoit jusques au ciel l'orgueil de ses creneaux ;
Qui, dans ces tems affreux de discorde et d'alarmes,
Vit les grands coups de lance et les nobles faits
d'armes

De nos preux chevaliers, des Baiards, des Henris ;
Aujourd'hui la maison flotte sur ses débris.

Ces débris, cette mâle et triste architecture,
Qu' environne une fraîche et riante verdure,
Ces angles, ces glacis, ces vieux restes de tours,
Où l'oiseau couve en paix le fruit de ses amours,
Et ces troupeaux peuplant ces enceintes guerrières,
Et l'enfant qui se joue où combattoient ses pères.—

Plus loin, une abbaye antique, abandonnée,
Tout à coup s'offre aux yeux de bois environnée,
Quel silence ! C'est là qu'amante du désert
La méditation avec plaisir se perd
Sous ces portiques saints, où des vierges austères,
Jadis, comme ces feux, ces lampes solitaires,
Dont les mornes clartés veillent dans le saint lieu,
Pâles, veilloient, brûloient, se consumoient pour
Dieu.

Le saint recueillement, la paisible innocence
Semble encor de ces lieux habiter le silence.
La mousse de ces murs, ce dôme, cette tour,
Les arcs de ce long cloître impénétrable au jour,
Les degrés de l'autel usés par la prière,
Ces noirs vitraux, ce sombre et profond sanctuaire
Où peut-être des cœurs en secret malheureux
A l'inflexible autel se plaignoient de leurs nœuds,
Et pour des souvenirs encor trop pleins de charmes,
A la religion déroboient quelques larmes ;
Tout parle, tout émeut dans ce séjour sacré.
Là, dans la solitude en rêvant égaré,

Quelquefois vous croirez, au déclin d'un jour sombre,
D'une Héloïse en pleurs entendre gémir l'ombre.

Chant 4.

There on a lofty hill exalted high,
Crown'd with proud battlements that scale the sky,
An ancient castle lifts his frowning head,
The country's tyrant, and the vassals dread,
Which in the days of discord and alarms
Beheld the broken lance, and feats of arms ;
Where Henries, Bayards, and our worthies old,
Their tilts and tournaments were wont to hold.
Where erst this gloomy architecture frown'd,
The yellow harvest laughs along the ground ;
Angles and bastions now are scarcely seen,
Cloth'd with a vivid robe of smiling green.
High 'mid the ruin'd tow'rs the nests are hung,
Where birds in peace brood o'er their callow young ;
Wide roam the herds among the mould'ring forts,
And where his fathers fought the infant sports.

Deep in yon wood a sudden gloom profound
Enwraps the abbey's lonely walls around.
'Tis silence all ! There Contemplation loves
To lose herself, as through the aisles she roves,
Where holy virgins check'd their young desires,
Pale as the lamps, whose solitary fires

Hung feebly glimm'ring through the sad abode,
Watch'd, burn'd within, consum'd themselves for
God.

Bless'd Solitude yet haunts each silent cell,
And peaceful Innocence there loves to dwell.
Those moss-clad walls which domes and spires
adorn,

That altar's steps, "which holy knees have worn;"
Those arched cloisters ever wrapt in night,
Those windows dim that shed a gloomy light;
Those shrines where secret victims mourn'd in vain,
And curs'd their vows, and voluntary pain,
When once-lov'd raptures seized the struggling
soul,

And tears of passion from devotion stole;
All breathe a tender melancholy round,
And more than mortal voices seem to sound.
There as you muse along the silent shades,
What time the weeping ev'ning sadly fades,
Some shrouded ghost still stalks along the gloom,
Some Eloïsa groans from yonder tomb.

In the early editions of "Les Jardins" the poem terminates with the apostrophe to the memory of Cook; but in the latter impressions, with an episode founded on the story of the Sidonian monarch, Abdalonimus. As this very

narrative, however, closes the second book of the "English Garden" of Mason, it is scarcely possible not to suspect that the Abbé, however he may have varied some of the incidents, borrowed this illustration from the British bard. It is true that the tale has been told by several individuals both ancient and modern; that it is recorded by Diodorus Siculus, Plutarch, Justin, and Quintus Curtius, and has been dramatised by M. de Fontenelle and the Abbé Metastasio; but as it appeared not in the first draught of the poem, which there is reason to believe was composed without any reference to its immediate predecessor, its insertion in subsequent editions, when the author must have had ample opportunities for becoming well acquainted with the work of his contemporary, cannot but lead to the inference which has just been suggested.

An impartial review of the two poems will probably lead to the conclusion, that, in dignity, simplicity, and pathos, the production of Mason be deemed superior to its French rival, it must, in point of variety, and I apprehend, too, in point of interest, submit to yield a preference.

With regard to the *Anonymous Version* of the work of M. De Lille, the discussion of whose merits has given rise to, and furnished the chief subject of these papers, it will, I trust, be allowed, that sufficient specimens have been given to bear out the qualified assertions in its praise with which the series commenced. By quoting the original, I have enabled my readers, indeed, to judge for themselves, and I do flatter myself, that, whatever may have been said or thought of this *translation*, when viewed as a whole, the extracts so copiously brought forward in these essays, will adequately prove that they, at least, are not deficient in beauty, fidelity, and spirit; a result which, when the inequality of the work from which they have been quoted, and the oblivion into which it seemed to be falling, are taken into consideration, will render this attempt to recall into notice its better parts, an undertaking, I should hope, neither void of entertainment nor utility.

No. XVII.

The gentle bard by Fame forgotten.

JOHN SCOTT.

THE Miscellaneous Poems of Dr. Beaumont, of which, in No. IX., I have promised to take a further notice, were published at Cambridge in 1749, under the title of "Original Poems in English and Latin."

The latter, which occupy only about thirty pages, possess nothing remarkable either in relation to their matter or their manner, except that as specimens of classical purity of style, they will by no means stand the test of criticism. Their deficiency in this respect, indeed, has been apologised for by the Memorialist of his Life and Writings in the following terms:—"If in his style," says he, "he sometimes sinks below the purity of the *Augustan* age, it is to be remembered, that he had been long conversant with the ecclesiastical writers, and the later his-

torians; and therefore it is less to be wondered at, if the reader now and then meets with the harsh language of *Tertullian*, where he expected the happy elegancy of *Horace* or *Ovid*.*

The defect, however, is of vital importance in this department of composition, and as the subjects which he has chosen thus to clothe, are, with very few exceptions, of a trifling and uninteresting nature, I shall content myself with but one extract, which I have selected, as it affords us, in the first place, a proof that these miscellaneous pieces, like the elaborate poem of *Psyche*, were written at *Hadleigh*; and, in the second, as it presents us with the only direct allusion to his native town and stream, which I have been able to discover in his writings. The poet is lamenting the apparently diminished affection of one of his dearest friends, and, in the conflict of his mind, he calls upon the *Brett* to witness to his sorrows:

Tu, Brette, pratis qui recreas sitim,
Tortisque furtim laberis atriis
Qui fallis Hadleiam fluentis
Quæ fugiunt remanentque semper

* *Life* prefixed, p. xxv.

Dic O ! propinquis quot tua murmura
Vici querelis.

The English poems are justly said by the editor to possess the same general tendency which was conspicuously the aim of their author's whole life; that is, "to recommend a sincere love of virtue, and to express that awe of the Supreme Being, which ever filled his grateful and humble heart."* They partake, however, of the same faults which have, with respect to style, so deeply blemished the pages of his *Psyche*, though not in an equal degree; for they exhibit a greater perspicuity and chastity of diction, and a greater freedom from far-fetched conceits and colloquial familiarities. Their texture, indeed, being altogether of a lyric cast, and, therefore, void of narrative, may in some measure account for this; yet from the sixty-five quarto pages which are devoted to these compositions, I do not think it possible to extract more than eight or nine passages, which, in a poetic light, will be considered as reflecting credit on the memory of their author. If we

* *Life* prefixed, p. xxiii.

recollect, however, that from the folio of *Psyche* not more than eighteen specimens were deemed worthy of exhibition, the comparison will be greatly in favour of the smaller volume.

The collection opens with some stanzas entitled "Reasonable Melancholy," in the metrical construction of which there is a pleasing flow of melody, well adapted to the nature of the subject. The commencing and concluding stanza are more especially entitled to notice, as well for the philosophy of their sentiment as the poetry of their expression, and with these I shall gratify my readers.

Tell me no more of sweets and joys ;
Miscall not things ;
Nor flatter poor unworthy toys
As they were kings.
'Tis not a pretty name
That can transform the frame
Of bitterness, and cheat a sober taste.
'Tis not a smile
That can beguile
Good eyes, and on false joys true colours cast.



Come hither grief; one draught of thee
Will taste more sweet
Than all false joy's hypocrisy,
Which here doth greet
Deluded souls; one tear
Flows with more honey far
Than all *Hyblean* hives; one pious sigh
Breathes sweeter air
Than all the fair
Arabia, and can sooner reach the sky.

There is a moral and devotional charm pervading throughout the poetry of Dr. Beaumont, which tells us, in terms which cannot be mistaken, of the goodness of his heart, and of the fervor of his Christian faith. This is a feature which, whilst it induces us to overlook with tenderness many errors of taste, fixes us with a more than common interest on those parts of his writings which give a clear and unalloyed transcript of his thoughts and feelings. Thus, there can be little doubt from what we know of the tenor of his life, that the following piece of advice was drawn from an intimate and impartial acquaintance with the state of his own bosom :

Turn thine eye
 Inward, and observe thy breast;
 There alone dwells solid rest.
 That's a close immured tower
 Which can mock all hostile power.
 To thyself a tenant be,
 And inhabit safe and free.
 Say not that this house is small,
 Girt up in a narrow wall :
 In a cleanly sober mind
 Heav'n itself full room doth find.
 Th' Infinite CREATOR can
 Dwell in it ; and may not man ?
 Here content make thy abode
 With thyself and with thy God.

In the same pleasing metre, and in a vein of piety at once rational and glowing, he has composed an address to heavenly love, under the title of *An Evening Hymn*, and which, as being nearly, if not altogether, free from any quaintness, as to style or imagery, I shall give entire.

Never yet could careless sleep
 On Love's watchful eyelid creep ;
 Never yet could gloomy night
 Damp his eye's immortal light :



Love is his own day, and sees
Whatsoe'r himself doth please :
Love his piercing look can dart
Thro' the shades of my dark heart,
And read plainer far than I
All the spots which there do lie.

Pardon then what thou dost see,
Mighty Love, in wretched me :
Let the sweet wrath of thy ray
Chide my sinful night to day :
To the blessed day of grace
Whose dear *east* smiles in thy face.
So no powers of darkness shall
In this night my soul appall ;
So shall I the sounder sleep,
'Cause my heart awake I keep,
Meekly waiting upon Thee,
Whilst thou deign'st to watch for me.

There is in these miscellaneous poems, notwithstanding the brief space they occupy, a large fund of ethical wisdom, and not seldom expressed in very forcible and emphatic terms. Their author appears, indeed, from the turbulent complexion of the times in which it was his fortune to live, to have acquired a knowledge of

men and manners, which in a calmer and more settled state of things would not probably have fallen to his share. He had experienced many of the vicissitudes which necessarily follow in the track of such a storm as then shook the fabric of national polity into ruins; he had felt the stings of adversity and persecution, he had had his portion of sunshine and of favour; and of the world as he had found it, beyond the pale and protection of his domestic *Cares*, he thus speaks :

THE WORLD.

Nay, now I'm sure my judgment's sound,
Since ripe experience is its ground.

Why, I myself have felt and seen
Thy tedious vanity,

Fond shameless world, and canst thou ween
I will for thee ev'n common sense deny?

Thou wear'st a beauteous skin, I grant;
And do the deadly serpents want

Those dangerous hypocrisies?

Or is the poison's soul

Less its curs'd self, because it lies
In the brave ambush of a golden bowl?

When *Israel's* and *Wisdom's* king
Did stoutly to the touchstone bring
Thy fairest pieces, did not they
Prove base and counterfeits ?
Whose stamp tho' neat, and colour gay,
Their purest ore was but refined cheats.

And oh that I had been content
To rest on his experiment !
But since I at the cost have been
By thee deceived to be,
'Tis not another world could win
My heart to dote or trust on empty thee.

Go, fawn on those, whose frothy mind
Can solace in a bubble find,
And *Juno* in a cloud embrace ;
Who by the lying paint
Which smiles upon their *Idol's* face,
Doubt not to count the beauties of their *Saint*.

With the same good sense, and just estimate
of what is prized by the mass of mankind greatly
beyond its intrinsic value, has he weighed, and
found wanting in the balance, many of those
dazzling and seductive accomplishments which

have been but too often the handmaids of ambition, and have served but to render their possessor, either in a political or ecclesiastical light, the tyrant and enslaver of his species. Among these, no one has been wrested to worse purposes, or more effectually subserved the machinations of tyranny, hypocrisy, and superstition, than *eloquence*, whether flowing from the pen or tongue. In the latter capacity, indeed, it has done more mischief than the sword, and not only imposed upon, and led astray, the thoughtless and ignorant multitude, but, in numberless instances, the wise, the good, the great. To distrust, therefore, such a dangerous faculty, unless supported by a corresponding rectitude of conduct, should be the duty of every prudent man; and the following lines of our author, which inculcate the necessity for such caution in the most emphatic language, may be considered in the light of a salutary beacon. I would particularly call attention to the concluding stanza, as alike admirable for its force and perspicuity.

ELOQUENCE.

To speak or write
Things which dare meet the searching light,
Solid discourses pois'd with fit
Judgment, and trimm'd with handsome wit ;
Sweet numbers, which can Pleasure's soul distil,
And thro' the willing heart their conquests thrill ;

Words tuned by
The heavenly sphere's high melody,
Which with Devotion's music ring,
And the Creator's glory sing,
Words which with charming ravishment surprise,
And all the hearers' souls imparadise ;

Is brave, I grant :
And yet no certain argument
But he who thus doth speak or write
May be a " son " of swarthy night ;
Nor must we think to calculate of men
By the sole horoscope of tongue or pen.

That man for me,
Not in whose words, but deeds I see

Zeal's gallant flames. I dare not found
Substantial worth upon a sound :
His only is the solid excellence
Of rhetoric, whose life's his eloquence.

Yet whatever may have been the privations and disappointments which our author was condemned to experience, in consequence of the temporary overthrow of the constitution in church and state, we know that he waited the return of better times with faith, and charity, and *hope* ; and the poems now before me, which were written during the gloomiest period of national anarchy, exhibit, in almost every page, proofs of this happy disposition, proofs not only of his piety and Christian forgiveness, but of that cheerfulness and alacrity of spirit which could only spring from a mind conscious of having acted well, and therefore at peace within itself. There are, in particular, four poems towards the conclusion of the series, entitled "The Times," "Idleness," "Hope," and "Content," which strongly mark this character of the man. From the *first* I give two stanzas, as affording an admirable lesson for those who,

without reforming themselves, complain of the badness of the times : the language, it is true, is simple and unadorned, but on that account, perhaps, only the more forcible and striking.

Why slander we the times ?

What crimes

Have days and years, that we
Thus charge on them iniquity ?

If we would rightly scan,
'Tis not the times are bad, but man. —

If thy desire it be

To see

The times prove good, be thou
But such thyself, and surely know

That all thy days to thee
Shall, spite of mischief, happy be.

The *third* on *Hope* is entitled, from its very subject, to a more poetical treatment, and it accordingly meets with it in the following very beautiful lines :

Bear up :

Yet still bear up : no bark did e'er
By stooping to the storm of fear
Escape the tempest's wrath ! —

Hope, tho' slow she be, and late,
Yet outruns swift time and fate;
And aforehand loves to be
With most remote futurity.
Hope is comfort in distress;
Hope is in misfortune bliss:
Hope in sorrow is delight;
Hope is day in darkest night:
Hope casts her anchor upward; where
No storm durst ever domineer.
Trust Hope, and be
Assured that she
Will bid thee welcome to security.

Against the violence of the tempest, indeed, which raged on all sides around him during a series of the most turbulent years which this country ever experienced, our poet possessed another resource, which, next to religion, has been found most efficient in reconciling man to the numerous evils which await him in this sub-lunary state; for we learn from the history of his life, that the affection of his friends and the love of his family were with him under all his afflictions and trials.

To this, in fact, the poems I am now noticing

bear testimony, in almost every page; for they speak of friendship and domestic enjoyment in language whose sincerity will scarcely admit of a doubt. He who was entitled from experience to record the first of these blessings in the subsequent terms, could not, under any circumstances, be deemed an unfortunate man:

Parental kindness cold may grow,
 And filial duty cease to glow;
 Ev'n matrimonial fervor may
 Be chill, and faint, and die away:
 But Friendship's resolute heat
 With loyalty's eternal pulse doth beat.

But there is no production in the volume before me which so undisguisedly and decidedly unveils to us the amiable character of our bard, and the happiness which he felt by his own fire-side, as the second of two poems entitled "Home." There is an earnestness, a naïveté, in the language of this little piece, which must steal into every heart, and which brings before us, infinitely better than a more polished and elaborate diction would do, a distinct and glowing picture of the comforts which were wont to

cheer his humble roof. I know not, indeed, where, in so short a compass, can be found, throughout the whole range of English poetry, so warm and heart-felt an expression of domestic ease and relaxation.

Home's home, altho' it reached be
Thro' wet and dirt and night ; tho' heartily
I welcomed was, yet something still,
Methinks, was wanting to fulfil
Content's odd appetite : no cheer,
Say I, so good as that which meets me here,

Here, here at home : not that my board
I find with quainter, richer dainties stor'd ;
No, my high welcome all in this
Cheap simple word presented is,
My *Home* ; a word so dearly sweet,
That all variety in it I meet.

When I'm abroad, my joys are so,
And therefore they to me seem strangers too :
I may salute them lovingly,
But must not too familiar be ;
Some ceremonious points there are
Which me from pleasure's careless freedom bar.

But Home, sweet Home, releaseth me
From anxious joys, into the liberty
Of unsollicitous delight ;
Which howsoever mean and slight,
By being absolutely free
Enthrones me in Contentment's monarchy.

To this poem on the blessings of his own fire-side, the last which I purpose selecting from the works of Dr. Beaumont, I shall now annex, as in some degree accordant with the subject of homefelt happiness, here so strikingly illustrated, a few Sonnets from my own pen, the offspring of feelings and circumstances of no unusual occurrence in the routine of social and domestic life.

SONNET I.

WOMAN.*

WHEN burns the Sun on his meridian height,
No friend has he to share the lonely hour,
Till, as he journies near his western bower,
Her step in meekness cloth'd and dewy light,
Forth comes the Moon in modest beauty bright,
Her voice the love-lute, and her breath the flowers:
His heart is touch'd, he feels the tender power,
Owns her mild reign, and yields to her the night.

So glare the fervors that around the brows
Of lonely youth a fiery splendour leave,
Till WOMAN comes, to whisper blameless vows,
And bid the heart its perfect bliss receive :
To *her* we owe that of life's race, the close
Breathes the still sweetness of a moonlight eve.

* Written in a lady's album.

SONNET II.

TO MRS. DRAKE,

ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF OUR MARRIAGE.

ONCE more the morn returns with joyous brow,
The smiling morn, that by my shelt'ring side
Placed thee a modest and contented bride,
That made me happy, and still finds me so !
Here, in the bosom of domestic ease,
Blest with thy love, thy approbation blest,
A cheerful mansion and a mind at rest,
With books, with leisure, and the wish to please,

Be it our task, our grateful task, to rear
The cherub boy, still prattling in our ear,
To deeds of virtue ; may he so be taught,
That he shall feel, and value as he ought,
Beyond all other boons to mankind given,
A stainless conscience, and the smile of heaven !

September 8. 1810.

SONNET III.

TO MRS. DRAKE.

ROMANTIC Derwent ! since to thy wild shore,
Near Matlock's tufted rocks and mineral cells,
The bridal partner of my breast I bore,
And scaled thy fringed slopes, and trod thy dells,
Four years have fled ! To these sweet scenes once
more

We will return ; what time the sun-light dwells
Reclined on wood, or stream, or mountain hoar
At eve, and sound the distant village bells :

There, as we wander with our blithesome boy,
Where Derwent's desultory torrents roar,
Pleas'd shall we own the fears that erst our joy
Could temper in its bud, are felt no more :
Happy, my Love, that each succeeding day
Has fix'd that joy, but chas'd the fears away !

September 8. 1811.

SONNET IV.*

TO MRS. DRAKE.

Alas ! what days of sorrow and complaint,
What fever'd nights, by sleep or ease unblest,
What dread convulsions threat'ning to arrest
The falt'ring heart-pulse, tremulous and faint,
What pangs that mock the power of words to paint,
Have worn this frame, since last, in sweet smiles
 drest,
Return'd our nuptial morn, and swell'd each
 breast
With love and joy which no pale fear might taint !

For health once more this faded cheek reluming,
For hope soft-stealing on my anxious view,
For spirits bland their former seat resuming,
 To Mercy throned, flow forth my thanks anew !
And next, my Love, for care thy nights consuming,
For countless aid, to thee this verse be due !

September 8. 1814.

* Written after the author had slowly recovered from a violent spasmodic affection of the heart.

SONNET V.

TO MRS. DRAKE.

“ Hope comes to all :” so sang the bard sublime,*
In strains that glow with fire, and breathe of
heaven ;

And lo ! athwart the shades that changeful Time
Hath o'er our fields of sun-shine darkly driven,
Steals from her laughing eye yon beams of light ;
Yes, in kind mercy to our prayers are given
These cherubs sweet, and these, ere sinks our night,
Shall soften and shall cheer the gloom of even :

These, when the stream of years hath lapsed away,
Dimm'd the shrunk eye, and turn'd our tresses gray,
Shall many a blessing round our dwelling shed ;
These, where the pale moon gleams our reliques
nigh,
Trace our past love with many a deep-drawn sigh,
And bathe with frequent tears our lonely bed.

September 8. 1818.

* Milton.

SONNET VI.

ON RECEIVING FROM YORK A PROFILE OF MY
MOTHER, IN THE 91ST YEAR OF HER AGE.

Yes, these are features which I must revere
And love, whilst life shall last, and thought shall
flow ;

Features which bid in their prime freshness glow
Scenes of my youthful home, that now appear,
Through the long vista of each distant year,
Fair as the hues which live in yon bright bow
Spanning the arch of heaven! Features that
bestow

Thoughts of parental love, how fond, how dear !

My mother ! Time hath blanch'd thy tresses gray,
Nor with its wonted lustre gleams thine eye ;
But spared, in mercy spar'd, thy mental day,
Nor touch'd one chord that bids the heart reply ;
Dear God ! how shall I with due fervor pay
Thanks meet for this great boon, ere yet I die !

Of the following stanzas I have only to observe, that they are the productions of a *very young* friend, in whose welfare I feel deeply interested.

They would not, however, have been inserted in these pages, had I not thought them possessed of some claim to approbation totally independent of any bias in their favour which, from relationship or personal affection, I might be conceived to entertain for them.

TO

NATHAN DRAKE, M.D.,

ON READING HIS NARRATIVE ENTITLED "THE VALLEY OF THE RYE."

1.

O! THAT once more, sweet Rivaulx! I could view
 Thy ruin'd abbey venerably gray,
 Just as the setting sun, with fond adieu,
 Flung o'er thine ivy'd walls his parting ray;
 That, gazing on the spot, I then might say,
 " Beneath this sacred turf there lie interr'd
 " The bones of many, mightiest in their day:"
 And musing thus, methought the scene recurr'd,
 And pensive strains arose, more sad than night's
 sweet bird.

2.

They ceased, and all was still, except the breeze
That swept o'er moss-grown tower and mould'ring
stone,
And whistled thro' some hollow leafless trees
That grew alike forsaken and alone :
And now and then, by fits, a sullen moan
Would seem to issue from the cavern'd ground
Where rest the dead ; and oft, in gentlest tone,
Responsive echoed that worn pile around,
Of falling waters near, a soft and gurgling sound.

3.

But hark ! the same melodious notes once more
Returning, fill me with a pleasing dread,
As sepulchres and tombs slow murm'ring o'er,
They breathe a requiem for the hallow'd dead :
Again they vanish'd, and I fondly said,
“ O ever shall this spot be held most dear,
“ For old and blind the minstrel hither led,
“ Waked his lorn harp ; — e'en now that harp I
hear,
“ And loved Lluellyn's lay still lingers on mine ear.”

No. XVIII.

No cloud
Of anger shall remain ; but peace assured
And reconciliation.

MILTON.

No time was lost on the part of Shakspeare in carrying his plan into execution.* The next morning saw him on his way to London, having previously requested of M^ontchensey, that Helen, for reasons similar to those which had influenced him with regard to Hubert, might not be acquainted with the purport of his journey. He passed through Stratford, and Mrs. Hall, to whom, as being greatly attached to Helen, he communicated his views and wishes, accom-

* That Shakspeare's influence with his noble friends Southampton and Pembroke, and through them with the ministers of the day, was adequate to effecting what I have attributed to his interference, I have not the smallest doubt ; especially when it is considered, that *James* himself was, at this period, proud of being thought the friend and patron of the poet of *Macbeth*.

panied him to town, anxious not only for the happiness of her young friend, but apprehensive lest her father's exertions, both of body and mind, should be too much for his strength.

His first object on reaching the capital was to obtain an interview with Lord Southampton, who had formerly, as we have already hinted, been intimate with the Nevilles, and had used what little interest he possessed with Elizabeth in behalf of the unfortunate Raymond. His Lordship was now, however, high in favour with King James; so far back as the 4th of June 1610, he had officiated as carver at the magnificent festival which was given in honour of young Henry's assumption of the title of Prince of Wales; and but two years before the present period, namely in the July of 1618, he had entertained his Majesty at his house in the New Forest, whither he had returned from an expedition to the continent, expressly for this purpose. Since then he had been present with Lord Herbert of Chisbury, at the siege of Rees, in the Dutchy of Cleve, and was, at the time of this visit of our poet to the metropolis, in the full zenith of his reputation, both as a

courtier and a patron of literature. His affection for Shakspeare was well known to be almost unbounded, and as soon as he had heard the very extraordinary narrative which the poet had to communicate, he pledged himself to do all in his power not only to ascertain the fate of Raymond Neville, but to procure, if possible, an ample pardon both for the father, and for him whom there was every reason to suppose his son.

With this view, having previously ascertained from Shakspeare's enquiries that the house through which Simon Fraser had been wont to receive his salary for the education of Hubert, knew nothing further of what had become of Neville, than that when they last heard of him, he was supposed to be at Paris, his Lordship immediately wrote to the English Ambassador at the Court of Louis the Thirteenth, or rather of the Regent Mary de Medicis; requesting that he would instantly make every search which the government and the police would allow him to institute, in order to discover if Raymond Neville, whom he mentioned as having

formerly been his friend, were still in being, and under what circumstances.

The result of this application was, that in a few weeks Lord Southampton received information, that Neville, of whose existence he had long despaired, had been discovered in a prison in the French metropolis, having been confined there better than two years for debt; an event scarcely to be wondered at when it was recollected that his estates in England had been confiscated, and that, in all probability, the uncertain profession of arms had been his sole source of revenue.

As the charge of a treasonable correspondence, however, had never been substantiated against Raymond Neville, it was no difficult task on the part of Lord Southampton, considering the length of time his friend had been a sufferer, to influence James in his favour; nor was his Majesty's inclination to mercy not a little strengthened when he learnt the extraordinary particulars connected with the fate of the exile, and that Shakspeare too, for whom he professed the highest admiration, was yet

more interested than even his Lordship in the success of the suit. He granted, therefore, and with great good will, a full pardon to both the father and the son, with an entire restoration of property to the former. The extension of mercy, however, to the wild associates with whom Hubert had been connected, was a proposition which demanded further consideration; but, after weighing all the circumstances of the case, and more especially the fact that they had lately assumed a character little differing from that of common deer-stalkers, an offence then viewed in a somewhat too venial light, and that many of them were very young men, and some even related to families of distinction in the country, this also was in a few days assented to, under the implied condition of instant and total dispersion.

Nothing more, therefore, was now requisite than to make arrangements for the liquidation of the debts of the elder Neville, a business which, under the reversion of the attainder, was speedily effected. Letters were then written to the prisoner, both by Southampton and

Shakspeare, and forwarded along with the gracious act of the English Monarch, to our Ambassador at Paris.

During these negotiations, which necessarily occupied several weeks, Shakspeare with his daughter Susanna resided in the house of his tenant John Robinson, near the Wardrobe in Blackfriars, property which the poet had purchased about two years before. Hence, from time to time, had he written to Eustace Montchensey, stating minutely the progress which Lord Southampton and himself had made in the task they had undertaken. As soon, however, as the last despatches had been forwarded to Paris, Shakspeare, at the particular desire of his friend Eustace, set off for Wyeburne Hall, having previously requested in their joint names, in the letter which he had written to Neville, that as soon as he had landed in England, he would, without stopping a day in the metropolis, hasten into Derbyshire.

The time, however, had passed pleasantly with our poet during his residence in London. His friends there, and no man had more, flocked round him with the heartiest greetings

and delight. With his late *fellows*, Hemynge, Burbage, and Condell, he spent many happy hours, not only at the Globe and Blackfriars, but at their respective houses in St. Mary's, Aldermanbury, Holywell Street, Shoreditch, and Fulham, where the recollection of the numerous very curious circumstances and events, both jocular and serious, which had chequered their dramatic career, furnished an almost inexhaustible fund for conversation. But, above all, was he gratified in again mingling with his old associates in the literary and poetical world, with Jonson, Beaumont, Fletcher, Selden, Carew, Donne, and many others, at the Mermaid in Cornhill. This celebrated Club held several full and extra meetings on his account, and here were once more resumed those lively and interesting "wit-combats," of which Beaumont several years after, in his letter to Jonson from the country, says,

What things have we seen,
Done at the *Mermaid!* heard words that have been
So nimble, and so full of subtle flame,
As if that every one from whom they came,
Had meant to put his whole wit in a jest.

It was on the night previous to Shakspeare's departure from London, that he and Ben Jonson, having left the Mermaid together, at a somewhat late hour, the conversation naturally turned upon the friends whom the former was about to revisit. Ben had been much struck, as we have seen, both with the manners and appearance of Helen Montchensy, on his late trip to Stratford, and now learning from Shakspeare, that owing to the late train of events, there would, in all probability, soon be a marriage feast at Wyburne, "Body of me, my dear Will," he exclaimed, as he took his parting leave of the poet, "an there be a wedding at the Hall, you shall see me among the guests. Tell Master Montchensy, therefore, with my kind affections, that I have not forgotten his invitation, and that should he give away his bonny Helen this autumn, I will do my best to grace the nuptials."

After spending a day or two at New-Place on his route, Shakspeare was received at Wyburne with the most sincere and heartfelt pleasure. Montchensy had passed, indeed, during the absence of his friend, a hurried and an

anxious time, nor was Helen, though ignorant of the precise object of Shakspeare's expedition to town, scarcely less uneasy or apprehensive; for she could not but infer from what had fallen under her observation previous to the poet's departure, and from what had since casually, and almost unconsciously dropped from her father's lips, during his moments of abstraction, that something of essential importance both to his happiness, and to that of Hubert's and her own, hung in the balance. Her only solace, in fact, had been that of unbosoming her sorrows to her beloved friend Agnes Clifford, to whom she sent a minute account of all that had happened since their visit to Stratford, intimating a wish at the same time that, should circumstances assume a more favourable aspect, Agnes would pay her annual visit at the Hall, whilst the Bard of Avon was yet with them.

Under this state of painful uncertainty at Wyeburne, whilst Montchensey was anxiously awaiting the arrival of Neville, and Helen knew not what to hope or dread, the cheerful countenance and engaging conversation of Shakspeare proved a cordial to their hearts. He

took, indeed, an early opportunity of whispering to Helen, without entering further into the affair, that in a few days he trusted all would be well, both at the hall and in the cottage. With Hubert, however, he deemed it necessary in one particular at least, to be more explicit, for he had his pardon, and that of his associates in his charge, and he much wished, that before Raymond Neville could reach Wyeburne, the dispersion of these freebooters could be effected. Simon Fraser, he understood, had been repeatedly with Montchensey during his absence, and had told him that Hubert, who often called at the cottage, was, he believed, seriously and earnestly engaged in endeavouring to bring over his companions to a subserviency to his views and wishes, a piece of information which induced Shakspeare, the morning following his arrival at the Hall, to pay an early visit to the good old man. He found Simon and his wife, delighted beyond measure at the sudden and entire alteration which had taken place in the sentiments and conduct of their dear child, as they fondly termed Hubert Gray, and ready

almost to worship their friend Shakspeare as the author of so blessed a change.

“ My worthy friends,” exclaimed the poet, endeavouring to moderate their too warm expressions of acknowledgment, “ thank not me, but Him of whom I am the humblest of instruments ; and recollect I beseech you, that it is for one whom I have every reason to believe the son of my dear and long-lost companion, that I have been making these efforts.”

The words “ God bless you !” had just escaped the lips of the grey-haired minstrel, as about to reply, when the door of the room opening, there stood before them Hubert Gray. An exclamation of rapture and astonishment burst from the youth on beholding Shakspeare, and the next moment, throwing himself at the feet of the bard, he took his hand, and with a look in which the deepest anxiety was painted, he faintly uttered, “ And have you found my parents ?”

“ Dearest Hubert !” replied the poet, raising him from the ground, whilst tears started in his eyes, “ I would I could this moment fully

gratify your heart ; but I can, however, venture to say, that a few days, a very few days, will now, I think, decide the question, and I do trust to our mutual satisfaction. In the meantime, my son, and as preparatory to the disclosure we are looking forward to, I present you with this, a full pardon from our most gracious sovereign for yourself and your associates, who are prepared, I hope, to avail themselves of the royal mercy with promptitude and thankfulness."

"With that generous enthusiasm, my noble friend," returned Hubert, "which is sometimes found to burn with a pure and intense flame in the breasts even of the most lawless, these men have agreed to sacrifice their predatory habits for the welfare of their leader, and will, I have no doubt, on the sight of this instrument, immediately disperse ; and though their wants and mode of life have been such as do not easily accord with the regular and even current of society, I am convinced their re-union is not to be apprehended, influenced as I know they will be, not merely by the consciousness of the signal vengeance which may follow any contempt

of this remarkable act of leniency, but by the honourably-felt necessity of preserving their good faith."

"Hasten then, my dear son," cried the poet, anxious to escape from the reiterated exclamations of gratitude which now burst forth from the lips of both Hubert and his foster parents, "hasten to arrange this business with those whom I am now happy to term your *late associates*, and returning hither as soon as possible, hold yourself in readiness to attend me at the Hall at a moment's notice." Saying this, and repeatedly acknowledging by his looks the blessings which followed his footsteps, he hurried from the cottage and its kind-hearted inhabitants, rejoicing that he had it now in his power to tell Eustace Montchensey that Hubert Gray was no longer a companion and chief of freebooters.

It was about noon on the fourth day after this meeting at the cottage of Simon Fraser, that as the family at the Hall were walking in one of the home plantations, Peter came with information, that a gentleman was just arrived as if from a long journey, and had asked to



speaking with Master Shakspeare. "Show him into the library," cried Montchensey in evident agitation, whilst Shakspeare glancing a significant look at his friend, hastened after the servant.

It is scarcely necessary to say, after what has been made known to the reader, that this person was Raymond Neville. The two long separated friends embraced each other under emotions which would not for some time allow either of them to speak. At length Neville, collecting himself as it were with painful effort, exclaimed in a hurried tone, and with a look in which fear and hope were nearly equally blended, "Is Hubert Gray — is my son alive?"

"He is, and well!" returned Shakspeare, "and, let me add, that the question you have just asked, has afforded me nearly as much pleasure as even you can derive from the reply." And here he entered into a fuller detail than he had done in his letter to his friend, of what had occurred both in the family of Montchensey and of Simon Fraser, in consequence of the profound mystery which he, Neville, had preserved with regard both to his own existence and the parentage of Hubert, painting, in strong

colours, what had been, and still were, the danger and the sufferings of his son, of his sister, and of Montchensey. As soon as he had briefly done this, he rang the bell, and ordering the servant to tell his master that they should be glad to see him immediately. "Excuse me," he continued, "for thus hurrying you into the presence of Montchensey, but I am desirous, as he is apprised of your arrival, and anxious for admission, that he should be relieved as soon as possible from the torture of suspense."

At this moment, and as Neville was about to enquire further after his sister, Montchensey entered, and Shakspeare, pointing to the former as he advanced, and exclaiming at the same time, "The father of Hubert Gray!" he took a hand of each and united them. "May Heaven bless you both," he continued, "as this shall prove a pledge of lasting union!"

The solemnity of the appeal was such as might have influenced men much less inclined to reconciliation than were Eustace Montchensey and Raymond Neville; the former, indeed, had discovered his error almost immediately after its commission, but, though thoroughly

repentant of the deed, incidents had followed in its train which had ever since robbed him of all peace of mind ; whilst the latter, owing to a singular combination of circumstances, had remained totally ignorant of the real cause of Montchensey's attack upon him, until a casual mention of it in the letter which he had just received from Shakspeare, suddenly unveiled the truth, and placed before him the folly and enormity of his conduct, which, by suffering the malignant passion of revenge to sway his breast, had deprived him of an early opportunity of ascertaining the fact, and had, as its bitter consequence, plunged not only himself and his imagined betrayer, but his sister and his son, into countless misery and distress.

When, therefore, Montchensey, recalling to his recollection his disastrous mistake, began to implore the forgiveness of his brother-in-law, the latter instantly interrupted him by saying, " Seek not forgiveness from me, my dear Eustace, who have much more reason to ask it from yourself." " Indeed !" cried the astonished Montchensey, " in what way ? for I had ever thought you more sinned against than sinning,

and this assertion, I confess, excites my wonder even more than did your sudden and unaccountable disappearance immediately after our last unhappy meeting."

"You shall judge for yourselves, my friends," replied Neville, "for I will unbosom myself unto you without reserve. Your past sufferings, Eustace, call for the avowal; and the unparelled exertions of our great benefactor here, as amiable in his virtues as he is unequalled in his talents, have a like demand upon my confidence."

"Thou hast not forgotten, friend Neville, I perceive," said the poet smiling, "thy wonted love for panegyric; but proceed, I prythee, with thy narrative, and let us hear by what marvellous means, by what wizard art, thou wert able, lodged as it were in the arms of death, to vanish from all eyes, to escape from all enquiry."

"You will doubtless recollect, my friends," continued Neville, "the charge so falsely and so maliciously brought against me during the last campaign of Essex in Ireland, a charge which, owing to circumstances springing from my unfortunate attachment to the daughter of Tyrone, admitted of so plausible a colouring, as

to close the ear of Elizabeth, then irritated by the failure of the expedition, to all representations in my favour. In short, I was compelled to fly for my life; but wishing, before I bade a final adieu to Britain, to see Bertha, and to entrust her with the care of my child, I came hither, though under the most imminent risk of detection, and contrived through the agency of two faithful servants, who followed me cautiously, and by agreement, from Ireland, and were natives of the country, to apprise Bertha of my situation, and to appoint a day and hour for our meeting.

“ So closely, indeed, was I pursued by mine enemies, at the head of whom was the wretch who had formerly addressed my sister, that I did not dare to make myself known even to Simon Fraser, though assured of his fidelity, lest I should bring ruin upon his head. A similar motive, together with the circumstance that I knew you not personally, whilst I was moreover aware that you differed widely from me in politics, induced a similar resolution with regard to yourself, and has laid, in fact, the foundation of all our mutual misery.

“ Think then, thus situated, thus dogged, as it were, by blood-hounds, what must have been my feelings, as alarmed by the exclamation of Bertha, who called out in terror the name of her husband, I beheld you, Montchensey, rushing sword in hand upon me, and branding me as you came forward with the name of villain ! The first idea which flashed upon my mind was, that you had become an instrument in the hands of my persecutors, a prepossession which, on recovering from the state of insensibility in which I had been left by the issue of the contest, was encouraged by the presence of those who then surrounded me, and who, I soon learnt, were the officers of justice. They had traced me, I understood, to Wyeburne, had followed me to the place of interview with Bertha, and had found me weltering in my blood. Their first object, as soon as they discovered that life was not extinct, had been to convey me to some distance from Wyeburne, lest a rescue should be attempted. It was here, in a mean hovel, and in one of the most secluded glens of this mountainous district, that I gradually recovered my strength, though not with-

out being tracked by the ingenuity and perseverance of my Irish followers. These faithful servants, or rather friends, as I might more properly term them, had, after hunting out my place of detention, watched night and day for an opportunity of liberating me from the fangs of my gaolers. They were not able, however, to effect their purpose, until having recruited sufficient strength to enable me to travel, on the second day of my removal from the cottage, as we were passing through a wood towards the dusk of the evening, and one of the three officers who attended me had lingered behind, he was suddenly attacked by these brave fellows, wounded, and disarmed, before his companions could come to his assistance. I need scarcely add, that arms having been thrown to me by one of my servants, I gave them every aid in my power, and we finally succeeded, after a desperate struggle, in disabling our opponents, leaving them in a state which would at least preclude them, for a long time, from all possibility of pursuit.

“ The first enquiry which I made of my liberators, who had remained for some days at

Wyburne after my seizure, was as to what had circulated there relative to myself and Montchensey, and I was rejoiced to find that though the disappearance of the wounded man had excited a great and general surprise, my name had not transpired, hushed up, as I presumed, by the care and caution, and injunction of my opponent. They further told me, that the grief and remorse of Montchensey, under the firm persuasion that he had slain the stranger, was reported to be extreme, allowing him scarce a moment's peace night or day; a piece of information which, at first, I could not credit, so unaccountable did it appear to me that the man who had evidently sought my life, should feel regret at the success of his attempt. Subsequent enquiry, however, made not only previous to my leaving England, but for years after reaching the continent, left me no doubt as to the fact, and I now shudder to record, that I enjoyed a malignant spirit of revenge in employing every effort to prevent a knowledge of my existence ever mitigating the sufferings of my supposed betrayer.

“ It was in furtherance of this unchristian-like

design, that, when just before my bidding farewell to my native land, as I then thought for ever, I wished to place my little Hubert under the care of Simon Fraser, the only individual whom I could then trust with such an office, I represented him not only as the son of a friend, but charged Simon, as he valued my safety, nay, my very existence, never to mention my name in the transaction, nor even to hint that he knew I was in being, requiring from him a promise to this effect, under the most solemn and sacred obligations. Indeed by no one, save this faithful retainer of my father's house, my banker, of whose silence I was well assured, and my friend Shakspeare here, was I known to be surviving; and the latter, in the only letter which he received from me many years ago, was enjoined, under the same plea of personal security to myself, a like degree of secrecy as to the fact of my existence. And what has been the result of this plan? What, but in as far as it has been founded on implacable revenge, misery to myself and all my connections!"

"For myself alone, Raymond," exclaimed Montchensey, "as deeply repentant of the error

I committed, and which may be said, indeed, to have laid the foundation of our misfortunes, much as I have suffered, I can freely forgive you. But what shall I say for my poor Bertha! I would fain hope you were ignorant that your imagined death, under the circumstances in which it was conceived to have taken place, was the sole cause of her affliction?"

"You do me but justice in the supposition," replied Neville, "for most assuredly had I known this to have been the case, the spirit of revenge, powerfully as I felt its influence within me, would have yielded to fraternal affection; but here, as in every thing else connected with this disastrous business, I was destined, as a due punishment for my folly, to be the unconscious architect of ruin to my own family; for as neither Simon Fraser, nor any one in the village of Wyeburne, had the smallest idea of my identity with the wounded and missing stranger, nor any certain information with regard to the nature or cause of my sister's indisposition, the whole transaction, indeed, and its melancholy consequences, being, for obvious reasons, concealed as much as possible within the limits of the

Hall, I had only a vague, and that a mistaken, idea of Bertha's malady, which was attributed by Fraser, and, as I understood, by the whole of the neighbourhood, to jealousy on the part of her lord."

"The history of yourself and your brother-in-law, my friend," remarked Shakspeare, addressing Neville, "holds out a striking exemplification of the retributive justice of Providence; for whilst indulging the implacability of your disposition, you have been unconsciously recommending the poisoned chalice to your own lips! whilst, on the other hand, the misguided fury of Montchensey, and his unworthy suspicions of his lady, have been followed, on his part, by domestic infliction of the heaviest kind, and by years of protracted remorse! But you have yet to tell us, Raymond," continued the poet, "what befel you after your escape to France, and how it has happened that, notwithstanding such numbers of your countrymen must have visited that kingdom, during the long period of your exile there, you have never been recognised."

"Sick of the world," rejoined Neville, "and

anxious only to fly from all probability of recognition, I immediately entered into the military service of Henry the Fourth, who, although the friend and firm ally of Elizabeth, was interested in my behalf through the mediation of Sully, to whom I had been well known during a former residence in Paris, and who, convinced of my innocence, favoured my views, and sent me to a distant colony, where first in a military, and afterwards in a civil capacity, I passed the greater part of my exile, regularly remitting, through a confidential medium, such a portion of my salary as I conceived sufficient for the education of my child. The death of Henry, however, in 1610, deprived me of this situation, and, of course, of all the resources connected with it, and returning soon afterwards to Paris, I gradually got into pecuniary difficulties, and finally into a prison."

Montchensey was about to make some comment on this detail, when Peter entering, informed Shakspeare, with a significant look, that one wished to speak with him in the breakfast-room. Here, in fact, the poet found his young friend Hubert Gray, to whom, on the arrival of

Neville, he had contrived instantly to despatch the faithful old groom, intimating a wish to see him immediately at the Hall, an errand which Peter undertook with peculiar alacrity and good will, for Hubert had been a great favourite with him, and, indeed, with the whole household.

The astonishment, the eager and almost breathless emotion, with which this enthusiastic young man listened to Shakspeare's account of his father and his father's house, more especially when the poet concluded by informing him that he was then under the same roof with his parent, it would be no easy task to delineate. It was, indeed, with great difficulty that he could prevent him instantly rushing, in the first wild tumult of delight, into his father's presence. "Spare, Hubert," he exclaimed, "spare the feelings of your parent; he is not yet aware of your being in the house, and, totally unprepared as he is, a sudden disclosure might be too much for a frame weakened by anxiety, fatigue, and long imprisonment. Suffer me to precede you, though but for a few minutes." He then hastened to the library, and briefly announced to his friend Neville, that Hubert was waiting

for admission. Montchensey and Shakspeare then almost immediately afterwards quitted the apartment, and, in the next moment, the father and son were locked in each others arms !

(To be continued.)

No. XIX.

“Farewell,” great Bard! rare gift to mortal men!
Which earth ne'er saw before, nor e'er will see
again! WHITER.

It was not until after a considerable time had been left for the indulgence of emotions which words can but faintly describe, that Montchensy and Shakspeare re-entered the room, the former leading by the hand his beautiful daughter, whilst the latter stood a silent but delighted spectator of happiness in which, as having been, in a great measure, its creator, he could not but largely participate. An exclamation of rapture burst from the lips of Hubert Neville, for so we must now call him, on perceiving his lovely cousin, whilst in the eyes of Helen joy sparkled amid tears, for she had been told of what had passed, and what was passing, and her heart had deeply felt the influence of the story.

“ My dear Hubert,” said Montchensey, offering the youth his hand, “ it is with heartfelt pleasure I again welcome you to Wyeburne Hall: let us mutually forget what may have hurt the feelings of each of us; and accept my warmest congratulation on the very important discovery which, through the kind offices of our great and good friend here, to whom we are all so largely indebted, you have this day been enabled to make. Providence, indeed, seems to have conducted him hither as an instrument to us all of its choicest benevolence; from *my* heart he has removed a load which had pressed it to the earth for years, and, could I but see my unhappy Bertha restored to society, I should have nothing to wish for on this side the grave. And here,” he continued, placing the hand of his daughter in that of Raymond Neville, “ behold the very image of your sister!— She has been to me, under every vicissitude and distress, a ministering angel, and will, I have no doubt, prove to us a bond of peace and union.”

The eyes of Raymond Neville had been, in

fact, rivetted on Helen, from the moment she entered the room; for he seemed to see Bertha embodied before him in all her youth and beauty. He took her hand, therefore, with feelings of peculiar gratification; "She is, indeed," he exclaimed to Montchensey, "the perfect counterpart of my unfortunate sister, as once I knew her. Ah! would to heaven, my dear young lady," he added, whilst a tear dropped on the hand that trembled within his, "that your poor mother could be but a witness of this scene!"

Scarcely had the wish escaped his lips, when, to his utter astonishment, Bertha entered the room. There was a wildness in her look, but in every other respect the expression of her countenance was singularly pleasing, for she had been remarkably handsome in early life; and though her features were now pale and emaciated, neither loveliness nor grace had deserted them, whilst her long, flowing hair, which seemed to have been carefully arranged, gave a touching sweetness to their effect. She was singing a little plaintive ditty as she entered, but the notes were instantly arrested on be-

holding the party. For a moment she cast her eyes around her, lost, as it were, in amazement, but the next instant fixed them intently on the countenance of her brother, appearing delighted at the thought of seeing him alive. The impression, however, was unfortunately very transient; for, almost immediately afterwards, her features assuming an expression of indescribable horror, she ran into a corner of the room, hiding her face with her handkerchief, and screaming out that Raymond was come from his grave to haunt her. It was at this crisis that Shakspeare, who had watched with great anxiety the effect of the scene, withdrew Raymond Neville to a distant part of the library, and, after a few minutes' conversation with him, he addressed a single word to Montchensey, who immediately left the apartment, accompanied by Shakspeare, his daughter, and Hubert.

Raymond Neville thus left alone with his sister, endeavoured, by every soothing means, to solicit her attention, and so far succeeded, that she once more looked upon him with an expression of delight. He then ventured gently, and almost imperceptibly, to place her arm

within his; and taking her, without any resistance on her part, into the garden, which immediately adjoined the library, he began to relate to her some of the principal incidents which had occurred to him during their long separation. This roused her attention; she became interested, and, encouraged by this favourable appearance, he entered with the utmost circumstantiality into the history of himself and his misfortunes; not only mentioning what had befallen him on the Continent, but purposely dwelling on those incidents and family affairs which had preceded their last unfortunate meeting, and which he knew had been deeply imprinted on her mind, minutely relating, at the same time, his recovery from his wounds, his capture, and subsequent escape. These were topics which seemed to restore him to her in all his personal identity; and so much did she appear disengaged from the influence of her former illusion, that, conceiving he had gotten entire possession of her mind, he ventured to ask her, in a jocular manner, if she did not think him very communicative for a ghost. She looked at him archly and laughed, when instantly,

withdrawing her from the subject, he again began to discourse on domestic concerns, spoke affectionately of Montchensey and Helen, and Hubert Gray, acknowledging the latter as his son; a piece of intelligence which evidently afforded her peculiar delight.

It was at this precise moment that Shakspeare, with Montchensey, Hubert, and Helen, joined them as if by accident, and were beyond measure gratified in observing the calmness, and even cheerfulness, with which Bertha received them, and entered into conversation; the change, indeed, appeared all but miraculous, considering the suddenness of its accomplishment, and the length of time to which she had been a prey to the most oppressive melancholy. To Shakspeare, in particular, whose unexampled kindness to her family had been mentioned by Raymond in the terms which it merited, she paid the most marked attention, giving him her hand with a look that spoke the depth of her feelings, whilst tears of gratitude trickled down her cheeks. Indeed, had she known the full extent of her obligations to this great master of the human mind, the sense of it might have

been too much for a frame delicate as hers, and which had just undergone a severe and agitating trial; for we have to inform our readers, that it was under Shakspeare's suggestion and arrangement that the fortunate experiment we have just recorded had been made. By his express wish he had been admitted to the presence of Bertha for some days previous to the expected arrival of Raymond Neville, and had cautiously communicated to her the intelligence of her brother's existence; but nothing seemed to shake her firm conviction that he was no more; that her conduct had occasioned his misfortunes and his death; and that she was nightly visited by his accusing spirit. Perceiving, after repeated trials, that neither argument nor persuasion availed aught, but rather irritated and confirmed her in her belief, he recommended to Montchensey the plan of a sudden excitement, of a sudden recall of the intellect to its former imagery and associations, an experiment which we have seen succeeded so completely as to disperse the mental hallucination like a dream.

It was still to be apprehended, however, that the advantage thus rapidly acquired might not

be permanent, and it became necessary, therefore, to watch, and instantly to counteract, the smallest aberration; and, in fact, notwithstanding Raymond Neville spent much of his time with her, frequently dining and passing the day in her own apartment, yet would the illusory ideas for the first fortnight often recur. They became, however, gradually more faint and transient, and at the end of a month, after years of partial seclusion, she once more returned to her place in the family circle.

Content and cheerfulness unalloyed now reigned at Wyeburne Hall, and beneath the cottage of Simon Fraser; and Shakspeare saw himself surrounded by those on whom, under Providence, he had been the means of conferring health and peace, liberty and happiness. Obligations great as these, might have been felt, indeed, almost oppressive from any hand save that of Shakspeare; but from him the blessing came doubled by the mode in which it was bestowed, so entirely did it seem the result of pure goodness of heart, unmixed with any sense of conscious superiority. He sate among them, indeed, with all the simplicity of the most un-

pretending of mankind, yet not without exciting, at times, that sense of grateful awe, which we might suppose to be felt from the presence of a being of beneficence and intelligence beyond the lot of humanity; for when the vast range and depth of his intellectual and imaginative powers were considered, and these were contrasted with the sweetness, the gentleness, and simplicity of his disposition and manners, he appeared to be lifted a step above his species; yet were these latter qualities so openly and perpetually called into play, that any humiliating feeling of superiority was lost in a cherished affection for the man. There was that, in short, about Shakspeare which rendered him peculiarly delightful to the young, the ingenuous, and the unaffected; and, indeed, so strong was the expression of benevolence and kindness depicted in his countenance, that it uniformly attracted even the notice of children, whose paradise it was to play about his knees, and struggle for his approving smile.

That he should be, therefore, almost idolized at Wyburne Hall, cannot, after what has been related, seem strange, nor that he should be in

a more especial manner an object of enthusiastic love and admiration both to Hubert and Helen. Indeed, long and secretly attached as these young people had been to each other, and favoured as that attachment now was, by the approbation of all parties, it yet appeared as if their approaching happiness could not be complete, unless their admirable friend were present to witness it; and it was accordingly agreed, that their union should take place before he left the Hall.

We have now, therefore, to add, that in consequence of this determination, preparations for the joyful occasion were immediately commenced; nor among the few friends who were invited must we omit to record that Ben Jonson was not forgotten. He arrived on the day preceding the ceremony, and only a few hours after Agnes Clifford and her sister, who were destined to be the bridemaids.

Never had Wyeburne beheld a day of such rejoicing as the ensuing morning ushered in. Every eye in the village sparkled with delight, for Hubert and Helen had been the favourites of all, and blessings without number were now

showered down upon the heads of the young couple, as they were seen, attended by a numerous train of relatives and friends, coming forward on the banks of the stream to the beautifully situated little church of Wyeburne. It was one of the finest mornings in October, and it gave no small additional satisfaction to the honest peasantry to perceive one whom they had ever looked up to with pride and pleasure, their worthy neighbour Simon Fraser, taking such an honourable station amongst the gentlefolks from the Hall, for he was pacing with heedful step, but gleeful eye, near him whom he had long regarded as his own, his beloved Hubert. Nothing, indeed; could well surpass the gratification of the good old man; for not only was his heart at rest with regard to the happiness and future well-being of his child, as he fondly termed the younger Neville, but it glowed with all a minstrel's fire, when Shakespeare, whom he had long venerated as the first of bards, quitting the side of Ben Jonson, approached him with the familiarity of friendship, and offered him the assistance of his arm. A finer subject, in short, for the pencil of Rem-

brandt, could not be imagined than were the heads of the aged harper and the matchless dramatist, at this moment of mutual courtesy; for the thin and silver tresses of the former, just lifted by the morning breeze, shone brightly in the sun-light, as he cast his eyes beaming with grateful enthusiasm on the manly, open, and benevolent countenance of Shakspeare, on whose features dwelt a smile of the most ingenuous sweetness, whilst the hair of the latter, yet untouched by time, and of an asburn tint, hung thickly clustering round his neck, and showed a perfect contrast to the hoary ringlets of his venerable companion.

A picture of a different kind, and one which to the *general* eye could not fail to be equally, if not still more engaging, was presented by the youthful bride and bridegroom as they returned together from the church. It would have been impossible, indeed, not to have viewed with something approaching to rapture, forms so well calculated to excite a deep interest in every bosom, even independent of those numerous associations which endeared them beyond measure to by far the greater part of all who were

now looking on. Every eye, in truth, seemed fixed with delight on the spirited and gallant bearing of Hubert, on the graceful, delicate, and highly beautiful figure of Helen; and as for poor Morley, who had been allowed to join the party on its return from the village, he seemed absolutely beside himself with joy, nor could any thing repress his open declaration of it in his own peculiar way; for he struggled to get near to Helen, and bounding before with rapturous glee, he would ever and anon look back, and exclaim, from his store of recollected fragments,

Her eyes, God wot, like diamonds arre,
I durst be sworne eche is a starre,
As clear and brighte as wont to guide
The pilot in his winter tide :

and immediately addressing those who were near him, would he add,

From toppe to toe yee may her see,
Timber'd and tall as cedar tree,
Whose statelye growth exceedeth farre
All that in frithe and forrest arre :

and, when any one, through a love for teasing him, which was but too often the amusement of the villagers, appeared to doubt the truth of his encomium, his indignation would burst forth in the following series of comparisons :

Set rubye rich to redd emayle,
The raven's plume to peacock's taylor,
Laye me the larke's to the lizzard's eye,
The duskye clowde to the azure skye ;
Sett shallowe brookes to surging seas,
An orient pearl to dun-white pease,
Matche camell's hayre to satten silke,
And aloes with the almonde milk ;
So shall, I wot, those maids seem faire
Who would with my sweet bird compaire.

It seemed scarcely possible, in short, to exceed the gaiety and satisfaction which pervaded all ranks on this happy occasion, from the master of Wyeburne Hall to the humblest of his retainers in the person of the simple but honest Morley. Mirth and festivity formed the business of the day, indeed, for more than a week, nor was there an individual throughout the valley, that was not warranted, for this

period at least, in the dismissal of all that might involve either labour or care.

As for the roof of Eustace Montchensey, it seemed transformed into the very temple of wit and pleasantry; and with such officiating high priests as Shakspeare and Ben Jonson, might this be a subject of wonder. It was a scene, indeed, peculiarly well relished by the taste and talents of the latter; for beauty, youth, and hilarity were around him, and the sack and Rhenish of Wyeburne Hall were, in point of raciness and flavour, beyond compare. Yet sparkling and high-seasoned as were the jokes and repartees of Rare Ben, there was sometimes a coarseness and bitterness about them which inflicted on their object a more than momentary pang, whilst the sallies of Shakspeare, keen and effervescent as they frequently were, had so much of naïveté and kind feeling mixed up in their composition, that even when productive of the heartiest laugh, the individual rendered immediately contributive to this effect, was, if present, the one beyond all others, perhaps, most ready and willing to join in the jest.

In fact, the example of these celebrated men,

who were not only witty themselves, but the cause of wit in others, might be said to have given birth to a competition of conversational pleasantries throughout the entire household of Montchensey; and when these flagged, masques, and pageantry, and spectacle, were called in, in the getting up of which, the imagination and technical skill of the two bards were exerted with a power of illusion which seemed to achieve wonders.

So delighted, indeed, were all parties with the generous and almost boundless hospitality which were displayed at Wyeburne Hall on this re-union of the two families, that it became a task of some difficulty to tear themselves away from their attractions. Shakspeare was the last who departed, and he left Wyeburne with a thousand benedictions on his head for the noble, generous, and unequalled efforts which he had made, and successfully made too, for the welfare and preservation of its inmates; and not without a promise, on the part both of the Nevilles and Montchenseys, that they would not fail to visit him at New-Place during the ensuing May.

It is scarcely necessary to add, that this promise was never fulfilled ; for in the April of the following year, and on the same day with his great contemporary Cervantes, died our matchless and immortal bard. The event, as it was entirely unapprehended by his friends at Wyeburne, having never been, apparently, in better health and spirits than during his residence there, proved to them a shock of the most severe and trying kind ; for they had ample reason, as we have fully shown, to love and venerate Shakspeare, not only in common with the rest of the world, but from a heart-felt consciousness of great personal obligation ; and they were, in fact, meditating how best, in their intended visit to Stratford, they should express their continued sense of gratitude, when the mournful news arrived.

There were few events, indeed, which could have thrown a deeper cloud over the happiness of Wyeburne than the death of Shakspeare, nor one that was likely to leave a more permanent impression of regret and sorrow. Not many weeks, in fact, were suffered to elapse, before Montchensey, together with Hubert and

Helen, who had not yet left the Hall, determined on an expedition to Stratford, not only with a view of mingling their grief with that of the bereaved family of the poet, but in order to ascertain what circumstances had accompanied or preceded a deprivation so truly to be deplored; and to indulge, at the same time, a melancholy luxury in visiting the tomb of their beloved friend.

It was on the evening of a fine day in June, about two months after the death of the bard, when they reached Stratford, and found the whole town still lamenting the irretrievable loss which they had sustained. Their first object was to see Dr. Hall, from whom they expected to acquire all the information they were in search of. As might be imagined, their unexpected appearance opened afresh the tide of grief which was but just beginning to subside, and Mrs. Hall especially, whose love and admiration of her father had been almost unbounded, seemed nearly overcome by the intensity of her own emotions. As soon, however, as the first burst of agonizing sorrow was over, both she and her husband appeared to enjoy a

mournful gratification in relating some of the particulars which had occurred during the short struggle which had terminated the life of their invaluable relative.

Dr. Hall said he had been extremely puzzled to give any satisfactory account, either of the name or character of the disease, which had so prematurely robbed the world of one of its greatest ornaments. "I think I told you," he continued, addressing Montchensey, "when we met last year at the College, that our friend had been subject ever since his great and humane exertions, during the dreadful fire here of 1614, to the occasional attack of an obscure, and for the most part, a transient affection of the chest, especially after any more than usual fatigue, either of body or mind; but as no man possessed a more easy and cheerful disposition, or was, on every account, more deservedly at peace within himself, whilst, at the same time, his exercise and mode of living were, in general, regular and uniform, these were of rare occurrence, and in the intervals he was in apparent good health. He had returned, indeed, from Wyburne, looking, to our great gratification,

uncommonly well and hearty, and had passed through the winter with only two slight attacks of his singular complaint, and those of but a few hours' duration. In the spring, however, and only a week previous to his death, he had gotten cold, in consequence of exposure to wet and considerable fatigue, incurred in behalf of a friend for whom he had felt much anxiety; and these united causes brought on an attack, which from the first put on an alarming appearance, and which, setting at defiance all that myself and another physician from Warwick could suggest for his relief, terminated the life of our dear patient, in less than eight and forty hours from its commencement!"

"And were his mental faculties preserved to him?" said Montchensey, after a pause of considerable length.

"It was an unspeakable happiness to us all," replied Mrs. Hall, "that my dear father retained not only his mind, but its perfect composure to the last moments of his existence. He had made his will about a month before, so that nothing relative to his worldly affairs could give him any disturbance; and though

he was convinced, as he told us, from the first, by his own sensations, that he should not live, and occasionally suffered much pain, and, throughout, extreme languor and faintness, his cheerfulness, and, above all, his resignation, never forsook him.

At this moment Mrs. Hall was interrupted by the entrance of the worthy vicar of Stratford, the Rev. Thos. Rogers, who had returned that morning from London, and who had called upon the Doctor to state, that he had, according to his wishes, seen Stanton the sculptor, who had promised, as soon as he was free from his present numerous engagements, to undertake the monument which he, Dr. Hall, purposed erecting to the memory of his father-in-law.

“I am happy to tell you, my friends,” said the Doctor, addressing Montchensey, Hubert Neville, and his lady, “that, I trust, I shall be able to transmit to posterity a faithful resemblance of our admirable townsman; for I have had a cast taken from his features, and, as his illness was very short, and neither distortion nor emaciation were its consequences, it will present him to the world, provided Stanton

does but justice to his model, with a great portion of that sweetness, benignity, and intelligence of expression, which was wont to animate his countenance, and delight all who approached him."

"Ah! would to heaven, you could perpetuate," cried Hubert Neville, with eager emotion, "a portion also of his genius and his talents; but, to adopt his own emphatic language, '*we ne'er shall look upon his like again!*' It would, however," he continued, "be a great satisfaction to myself, to my Helen, and her father, could we be permitted, ere the sun goes down, to visit the spot where you have laid all that remains of our beloved friend, to me, indeed, a more than father!"

"I will be your conductor," said the Vicar; "for though it is a melancholy office, it is one likewise which can never fail to be productive of many great and useful, and ennobling emotions." "I also will accompany you," said the Doctor; "but as for you, Susanna," he added, turning to Mrs. Hall, who had been for some time meditating such an attempt, "I am afraid, my love, you are not yet equal to the task." As he

uttered these words in a somewhat hesitating manner, Mrs. Hall burst into tears, and Helen, whose heart felt tenderly interested for her, took her hand, and they left the room together.

“ I do not wonder,” remarked the Vicar, addressing Dr. Hall, “ that your lady should still continue thus deeply afflicted ; for, I believe, no father ever loved a daughter more affectionately than did Shakspeare his Susanna ; nor did ever daughter, I will venture to affirm, more truly and correctly estimate the extraordinary worth and talents of a parent than Mrs. Hall. I have often thought, indeed, that she might have adopted, in reference to him, the touching language of the amiable Ruth, and have said, ‘ Where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried : the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me ! ’ ”

There was something in these observations of the aged Vicar which seemed peculiarly to affect all present, and it was not until they had come within sight of the hallowed fabric which protected the remains of the poet, that the silence was materially broken. Then it was that the singularly solemn aspect of the church,

venerable and magnificent in its architecture, situated on the very margin of the Avon, and in the centre of an extensive cemetery, embosomed as it were in a grove of lofty elms, and approached through a long avenue of lime trees, drew from Montchensey and his son-in-law, repeated exclamations of deep feeling and admiration. "How awful, yet how beautiful, is this sacred pile!" said the former, as they entered the buttressed and embattled porch which forms the north entrance into the nave, "and how worthy of being the depository for the ashes of our immortal bard!"

They now, preceded by the Vicar, traversed the building in deep silence, and on entering the chancel, whose lofty and highly-finished windows, filled with stained glass, shed a rich but sombre light over the whole choir, every earthly emotion, every thought save what was prompted by religious feeling and the solemn purport of their visit, seemed to die within them. "Beneath yonder flag," said the Vicar, pointing to one somewhat remarkably distinguished, at the moment, by a setting sun-beam lingering

on its site, "rests all that can perish of our beloved Shakspeare !"

They drew near, and, after an unbroken pause of some minutes, during which more than one tear was heard to fall upon the stone which covered his remains, Montchensey read, though in a somewhat tremulous voice, the four following lines, which he found inscribed upon its surface :

Good frend, for Jesus sake forbear
To digg the dust enclosed heare ;
Blest be y^e man y^t spares thes stones,
And curst be he y^t moves my bones.

"This rather singular inscription," remarked the Vicar, as soon as Montchensey had ceased reading, "was written by our friend, and at his request placed upon his grave, in order, if possible, to protect it from a violation to which many of the tombs in this church, I am sorry to say, have been for ages subjected, and which, however custom may have reconciled it to the general mind, he viewed with abhorrence. You perceive that ornamented door on your left hand, it opens into a Saxon crypt or charnel-

house, which, from its appearance, is probably the most ancient part of our venerable fabric; and hither, from a remote period, has it been usual from time to time to remove the bones of the dead from the grave which they had long tenanted. An instance of the kind, if I recollect aright, fell under the cognizance of him who now sleeps beneath our feet, and the impression arising from the melancholy spectacle was such as to suggest the petition, the blessing, and the imprecation which you have just repeated."

"That they will have their *due influence* with posterity," exclaimed Hubert Neville, "there can be no doubt, for who, knowing this to be the grave of Shakspeare, will dare to violate such an asylum!"

"The monument which we purpose erecting to his memory," said Dr. Hall, "will, of course, point to this stone as covering his remains. It will be placed immediately over it, against this north wall of the chancel, and the bust, which is to constitute its most important part, will, I flatter myself, carry to a remote age the express image and features of his person."

“ It is of yet greater importance,” remarked the Vicar, raising himself from the posture of meditation in which he had been for some time absorbed, “ that to distant times it should be known that our admirable friend, gifted as he was beyond all the sons of men, was, on principle, and after due enquiry, a firm believer in the truths of our holy religion. I am anxious, therefore, to record, whilst we are thus standing over the yet warm ashes of the poet, and I would fain hope the attestation may be as durable as his own fame, that no man ever left the world with a spirit more humble or resigned, or with one more unreservedly reposing on the merits of its Saviour, and the mercies of its God.”

THE END.



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